DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 441 920 UD 033 593

TITLE	Study of Local Agency Activities under the Title I, Part D, Program. Program Profiles 2000.
INSTITUTION	Department of Education, Washington, DC. Planning and Evaluation Service.; Research Triangle Inst., Durham, NC.
REPORT NO	ED-OUS-PES-2000-3
PUB DATE	2000-04-00
NOTE	116p.; Study Director was Michael D. Tashjian.
CONTRACT	EA94053001
AVAILABLE FROM	ED Pubs, P.O. Box 1398, Jessup, MD 20794-1398. Tel: 877-433-7827 (Toll Free); Fax: 301-470-1244; e-mail: edpubs@inet.ed.gov. For full text: http://www.ed.gov/offices/OUS/eval/elem.html.
PUB TYPE	Reports - Research (143)
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC05 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	*Child Neglect; *Compensatory Education; Correctional Institutions; Dropouts; Educational Finance; Federal Aid; Financial Support; *High Risk Students; Profiles; Program Evaluation; *School Districts
IDENTIFIERS	*Elementary Secondary Education Act Title I

ABSTRACT

Part D of Title 1 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act authorizes two programs specifically for children and youth who are neglected, delinquent, or at risk of dropping out of school. Subpart 1 provides financial assistance to programs for youth in state-operated institutions, and Subpart 2 provides financial assistance to support local education agency (LEA) programs involving collaboration with locally operated correctional facilities. In October 1996, a study was undertaken to provide descriptive information on LEA activities under the program through site visits to nine programs. This report summarizes the methodology used to study these programs and identifies some of the key issues and findings that emerged from the investigation of local programs. The nine programs varied widely with respect to purpose, grant amount, number of students served, and number of participating facilities or schools. All but one of the programs did provide some academic instruction in the detention environment. Local programs were much less likely to use program funds for the other two basic goals of the Part D program: dropout prevention in the regular schools; and formal transition services for youth returning from a detention facility. Formal transition or aftercare programs remained scarce. Individual site reports profile each of the programs studied. (SLD)

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PLANNING AND EVALUATION SERVICE

STUDY OF LOCAL AGENCY ACTIVITIES UNDER THE TITLE I, PART D, PROGRAM

Program Profiles

2000

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION ~ OFFICE OF THE UNDER SECRETARY
DOC #2000-3

STUDY OF LOCAL AGENCY ACTIVITIES UNDER THE TITLE I, PART D, PROGRAM

Program Profiles

Prepared for:

U.S. Department of Education
Office of the Under Secretary

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Contract No. EA94053001

2000

This report was prepared for the U. S. Department of Education under Contract No. EA94053001. The views expressed herein are those of the contractor. No official endorsement by the U. S. Department of Education is intended or should be inferred.

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April 2000

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Acknowledgments

We thank all the people who provided assistance and support during the study, particularly Robin Chait, the project officer, who provided thoughtful guidance during all phases of our work. We are also indebted to Paul S. Brown and Patrick Smith of the Title I program office in the Office of Elementary and Secondary Education and Stephanie Stullich and Val Plisko of the Planning and Evaluation Service, Office of the Under Secretary, who were all helpful in answering our questions and reviewing our work.

We are especially grateful to the many individuals who gave their time and knowledge to the study by sharing their experiences with us, including the state educational agency, local educational agency, school, and facility staff members with whom we visited in the nine sites whose programs are reviewed here. We also thank the students we met during the course of this study. The Research Triangle Institute study team included Todd Arrington, Erin Cashman, Barbara Elliot, Kelly Long, Norma Marti, Christene Tashjian, and Michael D. Tashjian.

Michael D. Tashjian
Study Director

Introduction

Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) represents the federal government's primary investment in improving education for children and youth at risk of school failure. Part D of Title I authorizes two programs specifically for children and youth who are neglected, delinquent, or at risk of dropping out of school: Subpart 1, which provides financial assistance to educational programs for youth in state-operated institutions or community day programs for neglected or delinquent youth; and Subpart 2, which provides financial assistance to support local educational agency (LEA) programs involving collaboration with locally operated correctional facilities. The purposes of Subpart 2 programs are to:

- Carry out high quality education programs to prepare youth for secondary school completion, training, and employment, or further education.
- Provide activities to facilitate the transition of such youth from the correctional program to further education or employment.
- Operate dropout prevention programs in local schools for youth at risk of dropping out of school and youth returning from correctional facilities.[1]

Most students served by the Subpart 2 program are at risk of school failure as a result of multiple factors, and many perform at three or more grade levels below their noninstitutionalized peers.

Under the Improving America's Schools Act (P.L. 103-82), which reauthorized Title I in 1994 and created the Subpart 2 program, each state retains funds generated under Part A based on the number of youth residing in local correctional facilities or attending community day programs for delinquent children and youth. State educational agencies (SEAs) use these funds to award subgrants to LEAs with high concentrations of residents in locally operated correctional facilities for youth. States may award local grants under a formula basis or through a competitive process. If an SEA distributes funds through a formula, it must divide the funds proportionately among eligible LEAs, based on the number of youth in delinquent institutions.

LEA applications to SEAs for Subpart 2 funds must describe the program to be assisted, identify the youth targeted for services, discuss the types of services to be provided, and describe

[1] P.L. 103-382, Part D, Subpart 2, sec.1421.

how the program will coordinate the roles and responsibilities of correctional facilities, schools, local agencies, businesses, parents, and other individuals. By statute, any LEA receiving funds must use a portion of the grant to operate a dropout prevention program in one or more of the district's regular schools, unless 30 percent or more of the youth residing in area facilities will live outside the district's boundaries upon leaving the institution. Each correctional facility or delinquent institution receiving assistance must have a formal agreement with the LEA describing the program and services to be provided to its population of eligible residents and must ensure, to the extent feasible, that its educational program is coordinated with the students' home schools.

In October 1998, the Planning and Evaluation Service of the U.S. Department of Education (ED) contracted with the Research Triangle Institute (RTI) to obtain descriptive information on LEA activities under the program through site visits to nine programs. In the remainder of this introductory section we summarize the study's methodology and briefly identify some of the key issues and findings that emerged from our investigation of local programs. Individual site reports follow this introductory section.

Study Methods

Our principal objective in selecting nine sites for on-site data collection was to ensure diversity with respect to geographic location and program design. We purposively selected nine states that, in the aggregate, represented all major regions of the country and included states of varying size.[2] Our selection of districts in these nine states was guided by information we gleaned from ED program documentation and from interviews with SEA Title I coordinators to (1) identify the state role in the administration and operation of Subpart 2 programs and (2) obtain recommendation for LEAs that merited on-site data collection by virtue of program size and design.

The objective of our on-site data collection was to obtain detailed descriptions of (1) program goals and design, (2) students and student selection, (3) program structure and staffing, (4) program services and activities, and (5) program evaluation. We developed research questions in each of the areas of inquiry and loosely structured data collection protocols, based

[2] A total of 45 SEAs received Subpart 2 funding.

on those questions, to guide our discussions with LEA, facility, and school staff members. While on site we also reviewed available program documentation, including applications for funding, program descriptions, cooperative agreements between the LEA and facilities, and evaluation reports.

Study Findings

The nine local programs we visited varied widely with respect to purpose, grant amount, number of students served, and number of participating facilities or schools, as indicated in Table 1. At the same time, all but one of the programs provided some amount of academic instruction in the detention environment. Our discussions with state Title I coordinators during the selection process indicated that local programs are much less likely to use program funds to pursue either of the program's other two goals: dropout prevention in the regular public schools or formal transition services for youth returning from a detention facility. Most district staff believe that the need for supplementary academic instruction in facilities for delinquent youth far exceeds the need for dropout prevention services in the regular schools.

Formal transition or aftercare programs remain scarce, despite widespread awareness of the need for such services, owing to a lack of knowledge in how to set up such programs, the absence of a mandate assigning this responsibility to any one state or local agency, and inadequate funding. The absence of post-release monitoring in turn results in a lack of continuity in the education of many delinquent youth, especially because students' length of stay at any one facility is frequently less than a full school year. Gains in achievement or improvements in attitudes toward education that students may experience in the structured environment of a correctional facility can erode in the absence of post-release services. A few of the states and districts we visited are improving the continuity of education for delinquent youth through the use of integrated instructional software systems, which are aligned with state standards for curriculum mastery. As we discuss in the profiles that follow, students released from a detention facility who enter another facility or school in these districts (or states) may continue to learn at the same pace, using the same materials and standards, to the extent that other schools or facilities in the district (or state) employ the same software.

We summarize below other findings and issues that emerged from our visits to local programs. These findings are organized under the study's research questions.

Table 1: Purpose and Scope of Subpart 2 Programs Visited

Local Educational Agency	Program Purpose(s)	Grant Amount	Number of Students	Number of Facilities/Schools
Orange County Department of Education Santa Ana, Calif.	Academic improvement Transition	$658,044	1,500	5 facilities
Polk County School Board Bartow, Fla.	Academic improvement Transition	$316,000	900	8 facilities
Unified School District 493 Columbus, Kan.	Academic improvement Dropout prevention	$35,592	58	1 school
Jefferson County Public Schools Louisville, Ky.	Academic improvement	$95,646	1,300	2 schools 6 facilities
Kalamazoo Public Schools Kalamazoo, Mich.	Academic improvement	$119,671	460	4 facilities
Duluth Public Schools Duluth, Minn.	Transition Academic improvement	$100,000	313	3 facilities
Lincoln Public School District Lincoln, Neb.	Academic improvement Life skills	$40,425	386	1 facility
San Marcos Consolidated Independent School District, San Marcos, Texas	Dropout prevention Academic improvement	$162,000	555	3 schools 2 facilities
Southwest Vermont Supervisory Union Bennington, Vt.	GED preparation Academic improvement	$17,707	23	1 facility

Program Goals and Design

1. ***What are the specific goals of districts' Subpart 2 programs (i.e, dropout prevention, transition from institution to school or employment)?***

   - Our discussions with SEA Title I coordinators in nine states indicated that most districts in their states used Subpart 2 funding to provide supplementary academic instruction in institutions for delinquent youth; school-based programs and formal transition programs appear much less frequent.

   - Seven programs identified academic improvement as their primary goal. One program in Texas identified dropout prevention as its primary purpose, one program in Minnesota identified its central purpose as helping students transition out of the facility, and general equivalency diploma preparation is the primary goal of one program.

   - In most of the districts we visited, the number of youth residing in institutions who were from, and are therefore presumed to return to, another district's jurisdiction exceeded the 30 percent threshold associated with the mandate to operate a dropout prevention program within the local schools.

   - District and facility staff at several sites expressed a desire to establish more formal transition oriented programs, but cited the lack of an effective model for doing so as an impediment to pursuing such a goal.

2. ***Why were these goals established (e.g., state mandate, to meet state performance standards, formal needs assessment)?***

   - Generally, district and facility staff believe the need for supplementary educational services in the detention environment exceeds the need for additional dropout prevention services in the regular public schools.

   - District staff in the program that focused primarily on dropout prevention established this goal to help students master statewide curriculum and pass the state competency exam. The program helped the district establish a continuum of supplementary instruction for disadvantaged students at all grade levels.

3. ***What roles did the SEA, LEA, facility, school have in developing these goals?***

   - SEAs typically did not play an active role in the design of local programs; the state's role was frequently limited to funding allocations and collection of year-end reports. Only one of the nine states we visited used a competitive process to award local grants.

- Districts varied considerably with respect to their role in the design of local programs. Districts that used funding to provide services in the schools tended to be more actively involved in program decisions than were districts where the majority of funding supported services in facilities.

- Facilities in the districts we visited had considerable discretion in deciding how to use their Subpart 2 funding, especially in programs with large numbers of participating facilities. The head of one program in California asked facility staff members to submit proposals to the district and awarded "mini-grants" to successful bidders that supplemented their core allocation and supported specific needs in individual classrooms.

4. ***To what extent, if any, is the design based on research on effective practices?***

- In general, the overall designs of the Subpart 2 programs we visited were not based on effective practices research. At the same time, several programs included one or more components (e.g., software packages, assessment programs) that were research based, and several individual teachers we spoke with based their instructional practices on a research-tested approach (e.g., reality-based theory).

5. ***How do districts allocate their Subpart 2 funds and what factors influence district decisions about how to allocate their funding?***

- In only one site we visited (in Florida) did the district allocate funds to participating facilities on a strict per pupil basis; each facility received funding in proportion to the number of eligible students who reside there.

- In other districts, facilities that generate local Subpart 2 funds do not necessarily receive funding in direct proportion to their number of residents. The amounts allocated to individual facilities in these districts are most often determined on the basis of need. For example, one facility may receive extra funding in one year to upgrade its computer capability and then receive less the following year when another facility receives an extra allotment for the same purpose.

Students and Student Selection

1. ***How many students do local programs serve and what are the characteristics of students served in terms of grade level, age, and other characteristics?***

- The largest program we visited, which was in California, served approximately 1,500 students last year; the smallest program, which was in Vermont, served 23 students; the age of students served across all programs ranged from 11 to 21 years.

- Most students served by the program are at risk of school failure as a result of multiple factors; district programs generally have high percentages (i.e., 40-80 percent) of students who require individualized education plans.

- While the vast majority of students served by the program are, in fact, adjudicated youth, most school-based programs serve academically deficient students who have no history of involvement with the juvenile justice system, and other programs serve neglected or homeless youth who reside in group homes or shelters.

2. ***Are all eligible students served? If not, what specific groups of at-risk youth are district programs intended to assist, and how did the district select students for participation?***

- All youth in local correctional facilities or delinquent institutions through the age of 21 are eligible to receive services. All of the juvenile institutions we visited operated institution-wide programs (i.e., all students benefit from Subpart 2 services).

- School-based programs tended to select students for participation on the basis of grade level and one or more at-risk factors (e.g., academic failure, disciplinary problems). For example, one district in Texas that allocates funding to schools selected for participation in the high school program tenth-grade students at risk of dropping out, with one or no credits, and a history of low attendance. This district also selected students in the junior high programs who had failed the statewide competency exam.

Program Structure

1. ***How many and what types of schools and facilities are involved in the program?***

- Six of the nine districts we visited allocated funding only to facilities; one program involved a single school, and two programs involved both schools and facilities.

- The highest number of facilities involved in any one district's program was eight (in Florida); the lowest was one (in Nebraska and Vermont). The facilities we visited included detention centers, halfway houses, county jails, boot camps, youth shelters, and other types of locally operated programs for delinquent youth.

- Types of schools we visited included an alternative high school and an alternative middle school in Kentucky; an alternative classroom in a regular high school in Kansas; and a regular high school, two junior high schools, an alternative high school (academic center within the regular school), and a youth shelter classroom in Texas.

2. ***How do participating districts coordinate their activities with local facilities?***

- In most localities, probation departments or other arms of the juvenile justice system (or their contractors) operate the facilities and direct the overall treatment and intervention programs, while LEAs are responsible for providing residents with an appropriate education.

- District coordination with participating facilities is the responsibility of the individual responsible for the Subpart 2 program, who may or may not be the district's overall Title I coordinator. In most smaller districts the Title I (or federal programs) coordinator is directly responsible for Subpart 2, while in larger districts another individual in the Title I office assumes this responsibility.

- In one district in California, Subpart 2 is administered by a separate division of the county school board that oversees correctional education, alternative schools, and charter schools. In another large program in Florida coordination between the district and participating facilities is a shared responsibility of the school board's Title I staff and staff of the alternative education division.

- Districts communicated with participating facilities through telephone calls, regular meetings, on-site monitoring, joint training, and cooperative agreements or contracts.

3. ***How do the structure and content of cooperative agreements between facilities and districts vary across sites?***

- Cooperative agreements between districts and participating facilities ranged from formal detailed descriptions of each party's role and responsibilities to a mere signature of a facility official on the district's application for program funding. The number and formality of written agreements between district and facility staff appear to vary primarily as a function of program size.

Program Services and Activities

1. ***What specific services are provided with Subpart 2 funding?***

- In most programs visited, districts used the majority of their Subpart 2 funds to provide supplemental instruction in reading, language arts, and mathematics.

- Virtually all of the programs we visited used some portion of their funding to purchase computers, software, or other instructional materials.

- Integrated instructional software systems, aligned with statewide standards for curriculum content and assessment, are a key feature of some local programs in Florida, Minnesota, and Texas. These systems include a diagnostic component that identifies a student's achievement levels; curriculum components that design individual programs of instruction in various content areas; and management components teachers may use to further tailor lesson plans and customize assignments.

- One program in Minnesota allocated the majority of its program funding to provide transition and follow-up services to delinquent youth. The district operates a three-phase program that includes (1) prerelease planning and student attendance at the student's home school six weeks prior to release, (2) weekly contacts by the project coordinator with the student, counselor, social workers, and teachers for six weeks after release, and (3) monthly contacts with released students for up to one year.

- Although only one of the nine programs identified transition as a primary goal, in juvenile corrections programs, where the average length of stay is typically one year or less, virtually all services are intended to help students go back to school or find employment, as one program's motto — "think exit upon entry" — communicates quite succinctly. Often transition-oriented services are provided in "life skills" programs through which students learn communications, problem-solving, goal setting, management of emotions, resource identification, and other skills needed to succeed after release from a facility.

- Many programs use a portfolio through which students show their plans for a successful reentry (i.e., educational or employment goals, necessary activities to complete, individuals they may rely on for assistance, etc.). Portfolios include a resume, documentation of achievements, and any certificates or awards earned.

- Another Subpart 2-funded transition-oriented service we learned of is a research-based program, called "Bridges," that includes three main components: assessment, remediation, and transition. The program measures students' learning styles, reasoning, visual, motor, and academic abilities; develops a profile of the student's skills and abilities as they relate to learning; provides exercises to develop capacity in areas of identified deficits; and identifies career choices that represent a good match for a student's interests and abilities.

- At one program we visited in Florida students who successfully complete a six-month boot camp move on to a three-month transition program where they work on their post-release goals, develop a transition plan, and continue their schooling. The Subpart 2-funded program coordinator compiles student records and meets with students at least once a week to help in planning their goals, apply for further schooling, or otherwise prepare for release.

2. ***What other related services are available?***

- The nature and extent of services available to students served by the Subpart 2 program varies greatly from district to district. Students in school-based programs typically benefit from the full range of services and programs available at most public schools (i.e., dropout prevention and safe and drug-free schools). Support services available to residents of juvenile detention institutions may include medical and dental care, psychiatric counseling, sports and recreation, tobacco intervention, alcohol and substance abuse intervention, cultural awareness, religious services, parenting classes, driver's education, anger management, career exploration, work experience, and others.

3. ***What is the relationship, if any, between Title I, Part A services and Subpart 2 programs?***

- In most of the districts we visited local Part D programs serve students in the detention environment while Title I Part A programs serve public school students. In these programs little coordination (beyond that required for consolidated applications for federal funds) is required.

- In two programs in Kentucky and Michigan, some Subpart 2 students live in group homes and attend alternative schools that are Title I, Part A schoolwide projects. These students benefit from Part A funded services during the regular school day (as do all students at these schools), as well as after-school tutoring at the group homes that is funded by Subpart 2.

- One school-based program in Texas uses Subpart 2 funds to provide supplemental instruction and dropout preventions services for junior and high school students, and concentrates Title I, Part A funding to serve students in elementary grades. Program staff note that many of the students participating in the Subpart 2 funded programs are the same students who received Title I, Part A in earlier grades.

4. ***What additional services might benefit the program and students?***

- Facility staff members noted that formal transition services to prepare students for reentry into their home schools or employment, and post-release monitoring and aftercare, are the services most urgently needed.

- Facility staff members said psychiatric and psychological counseling are other services in scarce supply.

Program Staffing

1. ***How are Subpart 2 programs staffed? Do districts have coordinators for their programs, and , if so, how much time do they allocate to Subpart 2?***

   - Facility and school staff supported with Subpart 2 funds across the nine sites we visited included 18 instructional aides, eight tutors, four teachers, three educational program coordinators, six transition specialists, a life skills specialist, and a reading coordinator. These staff often serve more than a single function. For example, classroom aides frequently tutor students before or after class.

   - District-level staff responsible for Subpart 2 administration allocate little time to the program; frequently the role of the district coordinator is limited to preparing the funding application, allocating funds to participating institutions, and providing technical assistance to facility staff, as needed or requested.

   - Facilities that use program funds to hire staff employ paraprofessionals (i.e., instructional aides or tutors) more often than certified instructors, an approach that allows them to maximize the total number of instructional staff and therefore reduce the student-to-staff ratio.

2. ***To what extent do teachers and staff receive training and technical assistance?***

   - Subpart 2-funded staff in all of the programs we visited have the same opportunities for training and technical assistance as do staff funded by Title I, Part A. Most programs also make additional training opportunities available that focus specifically on youth with discipline problems or a history of involvement with the legal system.

   - One California program that employed the greatest number of Subpart 2-funded staff, including 16 instructional assistants, provides new staff with preservice training, and frequent in-service training offered by the state, the county, and professional associations (i.e., Correctional Educational Association). Assistants who also serve as tutors participate in monthly staff development meetings with Title I, Part A tutoring specialists who work with neglected students residing in group homes.

Business, Other Local Agency, and Parent Involvement

1. ***To what extent, and how, are local businesses, health and social service agencies, and parents involved in local programs?***

   - The extent of business and community agency involvement in district programs varies from extensive to nonexistent depending on program size and purpose. Parent involvement is typically minimal.

- In a few of the programs we visited, local businesses and employers provide students with an orientation to or actual experience in the workplace. For example, students in one program in Kentucky participate in field trips to a carpenter's (or other trade) union and some students may be placed in the union's apprenticeship program. In another program in Vermont, local construction companies and fast food restaurants provide employment opportunities through which students earn an income (deposited in individual accounts by the program manager) they may rely on for food, clothing, and rent after their release.

- Most programs have established links with a variety of community agencies, organizations and individuals, including mental health agencies, hospitals, adolescent treatment centers, psychologists, YMCAs, and religious organizations, that provide services to individual students. Programs that involve halfway houses in Michigan and Kansas have established relationships with area schools that students may attend during the day.

- In the one program with a transition focus the project coordinator attempts to contact parents on a weekly basis during the first month after release, and then monthly for the remainder of the year. Generally, however, parent involvement is difficult for many reasons. First, many youth come from dysfunctional families in which the parents are abusive, have alcohol or drug problems, or have a history of their own involvement with the criminal justice system. Second, parents may have little patience with their child at the point of adjudication and are often relieved to transfer responsibility to facility staff. Finally, parents may live far away from the facility housing their child, work several jobs, and face other constraints that limit the time available to participate in their child's experience.

Program Evaluation

1. ***What data do districts collect?***

- All districts were able to identify the number of youth served and most were able to report basic demographic data, such as gender and race.

- All districts make some attempt to collect student achievement data, although typically these data are incomplete. Measures of student gains on test scores are especially difficult for districts to obtain, owing to high student mobility. Typically the number of students pretested is more than double the number who received a posttest.

2. ***What indicators do district and facility rely on to assess program effectiveness?***

- Most facility staff believe improvements in students' behavior and attitude are necessary prerequisites to academic improvement and are more realistic measures of program success than are test scores, in light of the time available to them (typically six to nine months) and the deficits with which most of their students arrive.

- At the facility level, staff use informal means to identify how individual students are progressing. As one teacher said, if students attend class regularly and appear motivated to learn, then progress is being made.

3. ***What are respondents' perceptions of impediments to more successful programs?***

- High student mobility is one of the greatest impediments to more effective Subpart 2 programs. Students often exit abruptly from a facility before they have fully reached individual goals or grasped the importance of education for their future. Many facility staff told us that their students thrived under the structured environment of a detention center, but these same students would lose that structure after release and return to behaviors that first led them to incarceration.

- Education plans for delinquent youth are frequently delayed because facility staff are waiting for academic records from the students' previous schools.

- Mandated pretests administered a day or two after a student arrives at a facility may not provide an accurate assessment of a student's achievement level, owing to the emotional instability associated with recent incarceration; some districts now wait up to one week after admittance before testing new students.

- According to many facility and school staff, inadequate funding is also an impediment to more effective programs. Additional funding could be used to purchase additional computers and software, upgrade existing equipment, hire more instructional staff, and begin formal transition programs.

Program Profiles

In the remainder of this report we present profiles of each of the nine programs we visited. The profiles are listed alphabetically by state.

Orange County Department of Education
Santa Ana, Calif.

Program Overview

- The Orange County Department of Education (OCDE) used its $658,004 in Subpart 2 funding for the 1998-99 school year to pay for 16 instructional assistants and to purchase computers and other supplies in support of the educational programs at four detention centers and a county jail.
- The central goal of the Subpart 2 program is to improve students' academic achievement, a purpose that supports OCDE's broader objective of preparing students for a successful transition from detention to further schooling or employment
- Last year the program served 1,506 students, with enrollments ranging from 464 students in the largest facility to 63 in the smallest.
- Instructional assistants work in the regular classroom, counsel students, and may elect to tutor individual students in an extended day program. Subpart 2 also supports a research-based student assessment and remediation system at one of the detention facilities.
- District and facility staff appreciate the importance of student achievement testing yet believe a more fundamental measure of program success in the detention environment is improvement in students' behavior and attitudes.

Orange County, Calif., is the 16th largest metropolitan area in the country with more than 2.6 million residents, 58 percent of whom are white and another 28 percent of whom are of Hispanic origin. Asian Americans constitute another 12 percent of the county's population, while African Americans account for just 2 percent of all residents. The county has a vigorous economy of over $88 billion dollars. Median household income in the county is $51,300. The rate of unemployment averages about 3 percent.

The Orange County Department of Education includes 27 school districts serving approximately 450,000 students in grades pre-kindergarten through 12. More than 7,000 of these students are enrolled in alternative education programs offered by a division of the Department of Education called Alternative, Charter, and Correctional Education Schools and Services (ACCESS). All ACCESS programs fall into one of four alternative education categories: adult correctional programs, charter schools, community schools, or juvenile court schools. The county allocates its Title I, Part D, Subpart 2 funds ($658,044 in FY 1999) to support

instructional assistants who provide supplementary academic instruction for delinquent youth in the juvenile court schools, which include four detention centers and a local jail; to provide supplementary equipment and instructional materials to teachers; and to provide partial support for a reading teacher. In 1998, approximately 1,500 delinquent youth residing in these facilities received Title I-funded instruction in reading, language arts, and mathematics.

We visited the Orange County program in March 1999. We completed a brief telephone interview with the California Title I coordinator in advance of the visit to identify the extent to which local programs reflect state guidelines.[1] In Orange County we met first with the director of ACCESS and then spoke at length with the Title I coordinator, who also serves as the principal for three juvenile court schools. We also met with the Title I instructional programs assistant, who supervises the work of Title I-funded staff at the facilities. Finally, we met briefly with the coordinator of the Title I funded tutoring program, which serves primarily neglected youth and is funded through Part A of Title I.

We visited two juvenile court schools located on the grounds of detention facilities: (1) the Rio Contiguo School on the grounds of the Youth Guidance Center Probation Facility in Santa Ana, and (2) the High School located at the Los Pinos Conservation Camp in the Cleveland National Forest. At each school we spoke with the assistant principal and several classroom teachers and Title I-funded assistants. We also reviewed evaluation reports for the program from the past three years, as well as a variety of documentation of ACCESS programs, students, and services.

Program Goals and Design

The mission of all ACCESS programs, is "To care for, teach, and inspire all students in alternative education programs." ACCESS programs are based on a belief that all students can learn and that it is the responsibility of school staff to address the varied learning needs, interests, and abilities of each student. The Title I program supports the overall ACCESS mission primarily through supporting instructional assistants in juvenile court schools who help classroom teachers identify and address the unique needs of each student through individual and

[1] The state education agency (SEA) awards local funds on a formula basis and affords local districts broad discretion in the design and operation of their programs.

small group instruction. To be considered for employment with ACCESS, prospective assistants must pass a basic proficiency examination administered by the county and demonstrate during their job interview with the Title I staff that they have a commitment to program goals and an ability to engage students.

ACCESS staff use the vast majority of program funding (approximately 60 percent) to support 16 assistants who work three-fourths time in the juvenile court schools delivering supplementary academic assistance to identified Title I students intended to allow them to learn new skills and succeed in the regular classroom. Assistants may also elect to provide extended-day tutoring to individual students who need extra support. Approximately one-fifth of the Subpart 2 allocation enables Title I staff to purchase instructional supplies and computer equipment for the juvenile court schools.

The Title I coordinator for ACCESS and the instructional programs assistant believe that using program funds for instructional assistants provides the greatest benefit to students. They believe that most of the students attending juvenile court schools require as much individual attention as possible in order to succeed. Overall, the student-teacher ratio in the schools is approximately 15:1, but the presence of Title I-funded assistants effectively reduces the student-to-staff ratio to 7:1. Using program funds to hire assistants rather than teachers (who receive higher salaries) results in a greater total number of instructional staff.

The Title I administrative staff noted that all instructional assistants are intended to deliver direct services to students, rather than provide clerical support to the classroom teacher. During our conversation, they stressed that the role of the assistant is to support learning by working directly with students. A handbook for all Title I assistants that details the roles and responsibilities of the position also underscores the importance of direct student services. All of the teachers with whom we spoke identified the assistants as equal partners in the effort to help students succeed.

The central goal of the Subpart 2 program is to improve academic achievement of students. This goal is part of the broader ACCESS mission. One key aspect of that mission is to prepare students for a successful transition out of the facility, whether to return to regular or alternative schools, attend college, or find employment. The phrase "think exit upon entry" appears repeatedly in ACCESS program materials to reiterate the goal of all the division's

activities and services. Thus, while not formally labeled as a "transition model," the design of the Subpart 2 program reflects the longer term goals of students served. As we describe in later sections of the report, the Title I coordinator is currently considering designating one or more Title I-funded staff to establish a more formally structured "transition" program.

The Title I staff meet annually to plan how to use program funds in the upcoming year. Although they maintain a commitment to the use of instructional assistants as the core of their program, they review annual program data to identify what additional needs exist in the schools that the Title I program might be able to address. In the last such meeting, the Title I coordinator and program assistant decided to provide institutional sites with an opportunity to decide how they wanted to use their funding not earmarked for staff. They used a "mini-grant" program to obtain local input into the planning process, and awarded several small (i.e., a few thousand dollars) grants to support specific needs in individual classrooms. One teacher, for example, used the funding to purchase a new software program for language learning.

Students and Student Selection

Last year the Orange County program served 1,506 students, including 1,348 males (90 percent) and 158 females (10 percent). The ages of students served by the program ranges from 11 to 18, with approximately 80 percent in grades 9-11. Approximately two-thirds of the students are of Hispanic origin (68 percent); 18 percent are white, 7 percent are Asian or Pacific Islander, and 6 percent are African American. The average student is 15 years old, in the 10th grade, and a minority male. Trends in recent years show an increase in female and middle school-aged students with low basic skill levels.

All residents of the juvenile court schools are eligible to receive Title I services. Program staff use a variety of criteria to select students for Title I-funded instruction. A student may be selected if he or she is:

- two or more years below grade level in reading, mathematics, or language arts,
- identified by teachers as having special academic problems,
- an English Language Learner,
- studying for a general equivalency diploma,

- leaving the institution, or
- recommended for extra assistance by probation staff members .

Also, any student who requests assistance will receive Title I support, regardless of skill level. All students complete the Basic Skills Inventory or the Brigance Diagnostic Inventory of Essential Skills to identify grade level performance in reading, math, and language arts. School staff may also use other, teacher-developed, assessments for identification purposes.

Program Structure and Staffing

As noted, all alternative and correctional education programs in the county are administered by Alternative, Charter, and Correctional Education Schools and Services (ACCESS). ACCESS programs include 45 community schools, community day programs, a charter school for home-schooled students in grades K-12, adult correctional education programs, and juvenile court schools. Juvenile court schools, which serve students referred by probation officers or social services personnel, include four juvenile justice institutions (detention centers), day centers, and group homes and social services institutions for neglected and abused children. Title I, Part D, Subpart 2 funds are used to support the educational programs at the four juvenile justice institutions and in the Santa Ana Police Department (SAPD) jail.

ACCESS is divided into 15 service areas or principal administrative regions, each under the jurisdiction of a coordinator or principal. The Title I program is organized into one region and is responsible for institutional support (Title I, Part D) and group home tutoring (Title I, Part A). As director of this region, the Title I coordinator oversees the Title I program assistant, five tutoring specialists, 64 tutors, and 20 instructional assistants (16 funded through Part D). The Title I coordinator is also the director of a geographic region that includes three of the four juvenile court schools, for which she serves as principal.

In prior years the director of the Title I region worked only in the capacity of Title I coordinator and allocated the majority of her time to the group home tutoring program for neglected and abused children, funded through Title I, Part A. Two years ago the ACCESS director, in an effort to more fully integrate the Part D program with other juvenile court school programs, created the current administrative structure, which has the ACCESS Title I coordinator

also serving as principal to three of the four juvenile court schools. The current Title I coordinator spends approximately 40 percent of her time fulfilling central office responsibilities associated with the administration of Title I programs, and approximately 20 percent of her time (i.e., one day each week) at each of the three schools.

As noted, the majority of Subpart 2 funding supports instructional assistants at four juvenile court schools located on the grounds of juvenile justice institutions. The detention facilities are operated by the County Probation Department, while the schools on the grounds of these facilities are governed by the County Department of Education's division of alternative programs. A memorandum of understanding between the County Department of Education and the Probation Department sets parameters and articulates each agency's role and responsibility. We briefly describe below the four schools that receive the bulk of program funding and the facilities of which they are an integral component.

Orange County Juvenile Hall is a 374-bed institution for juvenile law violators housing young men and women between the ages of 12 and 18 who are detained pending juvenile court hearings in an adjacent juvenile justice center. Youth are assigned to living units designed to house up to 30 individuals, typically by age group. The intake and release center houses newly arrested minors awaiting their first court appearance. ACCESS provides an accredited academic program for all minors at Juvenile Hall, including six Title I-funded assistants, through the Otto Fischer School.

Youth Guidance Center is a coeducational juvenile residential institution housing approximately 100 young men and 25 young women ages 11-18. Many youth reside at the center for 90 days or less, although the average length of stay for young women is only about one month. Seventy-five students assigned to one of two drug treatment programs at the facility serve a minimum of six months. The center is the only in-county placement for young women, other than Juvenile Hall, a factor in the considerably shorter length of stay for those assigned to the center. The Rio Contiguo School, located on the center's grounds, serves grades six through twelve, providing residents with six 45-minute periods of education, 244 days each year. The school is staffed by 11 credentialed teachers, and four instructional assistants (three funded by Title I and one special education assistant.)

Joplin Youth Center is a juvenile correctional institution providing residential treatment for 64 young men ages 13-17, whose length of commitment ranges from one to twelve months. The center, located in the foothills of the Santa Ana Mountains, was originally established as a Boys Ranch for runaways, truants, "incorrigibles," and other probation wards. ACCESS operates a high school on facility grounds that includes four

credentialed teachers and two Title I-funded assistants who provide year-round instruction to students in grades seven through twelve, through five 55- minute periods.

Los Pinos Conservation Camp is a 125-bed, all-male institution located in the Cleveland National Forest. The average length of stay at the camp is between three and four months, and most of the young men residing in the camp are between 16-18 years old. Owing to the slightly older age of Los Pinos residents, the facility, including the high school, places a somewhat stronger emphasis on vocationally oriented programs and on planning for transition out of the facility. The high school serves grades nine through twelve in six 60-minute periods of instruction.

These four facilities house more than 95 percent of the delinquent youth served by the Subpart 2 program. The other 5 percent receive services in the Santa Ana Police Department (SAPD) jail, a largely adult facility that houses some juveniles for short periods of time. The jail's education program began in late 1996-97 and initiated Title I-funded services only in late 1998.

The Title I, Part D budget for June 1998-June 1999 supports a total of 14.5 full-time equivalent (FTE) staff positions, as follows:

- Administration 1.4 FTEs
- Instructional Assistants 12 FTEs (16 at 75% time)
- Reading coordinator 0.5 FTE
- Transition 0.5 FTE

Administrative positions include the Title I coordinator and an instructional programs assistant. The coordinator said she allocates 40 percent of her time to Title I administration and 60 percent to her role as principal of three juvenile court schools. The instructional program assistant's central responsibility is to supervise the work of the instructional assistants through weekly visits and frequent phone contact at all sites. She identifies the need for any technical support at the sites and targets areas for future staff development activities. The program assistant also works closely with the supervisor of the Title I, Part A tutoring program.

The 16 instructional assistants provide direct services to students in the classroom and through extended day tutoring programs at each of the institutional sites. Assistants who provide tutoring participate in monthly staff development meetings with the Title I, Part A tutoring specialists. Each assistant brings a unique set of skills and experiences to his or her work and the Title I coordinator and program assistant attempt to match these characteristics with specific

needs at each facility. One of the assistants, a Hispanic male who has considerable expertise in computers and associated technology, provides technical support for the use and maintenance of Title I computers, software, and documentation.

All Title I staff participate in staff development activities, offered through the state, the county, professional associations, (e.g., Correctional Education Association), and other ACCESS staff members. Examples of staff development in recent years include a Reading to Learn conference, attended by all instructional assistants, a "phonics fair," mathematics workshops, and a technology conference that focused on the use of computers in the classroom. Title I staff development in-service training has focused on topics such as gender equity, accountability, and associated regulations and guidance. Also, all Title I Tutors receive three hours of staff training every month. Future staff development will focus on increased familiarity with instructional technology and use of assessment measures for tracking student progress.

The Title I coordinator plans to hire a staff member whose principal responsibility will be to coordinate transition out of institutions for Title I students. The coordinator said "Transition is a very important component of an effective program and one that we have not addressed strongly enough." While some form of transition services are available at all sites, the nature and scope of these services vary from institution to institution as a function of program size, students' ages and length of stay, and available funding. The coordinator and her staff are considering whether to hire someone on a full-time basis or two or three individuals who would work on transition planning part-time. ACCESS staff and Probation Department officials share a desire for good transition programs, but inadequate funding and the lack of a demonstrably effective design for such a program continue to slow progress.

Program Services and Activities

The district uses most of its Subpart 2 allocation to support instructional assistants in facility classrooms, who provide one-on-one or small group instruction to students in reading, mathematics, and language arts. Several bilingual Title I-funded assistants provide instruction in English as a Second Language as part of their work in reading classes. Instructional assistants provide all instructional services in a regular classroom setting; ACCESS discontinued the lone

pull-out program in reading last year. Table 1 identifies the number of students who received Title I instruction, by subject area, at each participating facility.

Table 1: Number of Title I Students, by Facility, By Subject Area

SCHOOL	Number of Residents	Number of Students	Reading	Language Arts Writing	Math
Otto Fischer	3,569	464	421	629	313
Rio Contiguo	744	413	87	203	344
Los Pinos	453	418	418	418	418
Joplin	373	148	135	135	32
SAPD	425	63	12	26	28
TOTAL	4,658	1,506	1,073	1,411	1,135

Title I staff use a wide variety of approaches to learning, including a reading lab where an instructional assistant helps students develop their skills by working with a variety of software programs designed to remediate specific deficiencies. Another assistant identified a need for students to develop their research and writing skills more fully and now reserves one period of instruction to help students learn how to write more effectively. Title I staff also work in an integrated social studies and reading class in which the students listen to a one-hour lecture on a particular issue and then write an essay about the subject in the following hour. Staff report that students enjoyed the first such class, which examined the assassination of John F. Kennedy, and that the approach demonstrated to students their own capability to listen, comprehend, and effectively communicate.

In addition to academic instruction, classroom teachers and Title I-funded assistants also provide students with academic and transition counseling on an as-needed basis, and several assistants provide extended-day tutoring to individual students. The Title I tutoring program provides supplemental, one-on-one tutorial services to youth in residential facilities, including juvenile court schools and group homes for neglected or abused children. In the past year a total

of 247 probation students received tutoring services.[2] On average these students, aged 12-18, received three hours of instruction per week for nine weeks.

The Title I coordinator and instructional programs assistant are also working to expand the role of instructional assistants to include life skills instruction and transition planning. For example, at Los Pinos students begin to plan for their transition out of the facility from the day they arrive, reflecting the ACCESS directive to "think exit upon entry." Students receive a form that asks them to identify their educational, employment, and residential goals, and provides a structure for helping them track their own progress toward achieving those goals. Students are asked to identify (1) how they will break the cycle of activities that caused their incarceration, (2) steps they will take to stay the course when setbacks occur, and (3) those they can rely on when they need emotional support. Students work on their "transition folder" at least once a week and develop a transition portfolio that includes a resume and documentation of their academic achievements (e.g., course credits, certificates, awards) they can take with them as they leave the facility.

Another Title I-funded service with a long-term goal of helping students leave the facility is provided by a Title I assistant who works at the Los Pinos Conservation Camp implementing a research-based program for student assessment and remediation called "Bridges." The Bridges program is a tool designed to ensure that students are learning to full capacity. The Bridges Learning Center has three main components: assessment, remediation, and transition. Each student referred to the Bridges program is assessed through a series of questions and exercises called Structure of Intellect (SOI) that measure learner style, critical-analytical reasoning, reading, mathematics, and vision. Another assessment, the Sensory Integration Assessment, measures visual processing skills and sensory motor skills that may affect learning. In combination, these assessments result in an individual profile of the student's cognitive abilities, perceptual skills, and sensory-motor integration as they relate to learning.

The program then addresses student needs, as identified on the profile, through exercises that develop capacity in areas of identified deficits. For example, some exercises are designed to correct visual processing and focusing problems that affect learning, while others address balance and other physiological impediments to learning through sensory-motor integration. The student

[2]The tutoring program also served 716 social service students (i.e., neglected or abused) and nine homeless students.

profile also helps students identify career choices that represent the best match for identified abilities and interests.

Students may be referred to the Bridges program by teachers, counselors or administrators who are concerned with students' inability to meet academic or behavioral expectations in the classroom. The instructional assistant who runs the Bridges program has tested 12 students to date. She estimates that each student referred to the program should participate in the program for about three months in order to achieve remediation objectives and show classroom improvement. The potential benefit of the Bridges program is somewhat limited by the short-term commitment of most students, which precludes comprehensive remediation of identified deficits in many cases. This constraint notwithstanding, staff have already seen the benefits of the Bridges program in helping to isolate and improve impediments to effective learning, and are excited at the prospect of being able to assist greater numbers of students in the future.

In addition to Title I, the relatively resource-rich juvenile justice institutions within the ACCESS structure have a wide variety of additional services available to help them achieve a successful transition. At most facilities residents receive a variety of support services, as needed, including medical and dental care, psychiatric and psychological counseling, sports and recreation, and religious services. Other programs available to students include a tobacco intervention program, a variety of mandatory and voluntary alcohol and substance abuse intervention programs, anger management, cultural awareness classes, parenting classes, driver's education, career exploration, and work experience. Regular meetings between education and probation staff, often in the form of student consultation teams, help ensure that students' myriad service needs are addressed.

We asked all staff members with whom we spoke if there were any services needed by students that the facilities or schools did not sufficiently provide. One staff member believes that more vocationally oriented programs should be available to students, especially those in the 17-18 year old range. While some job readiness, vocational, and career exploration opportunities are available through the Regional Occupation Program (ROP) and traditional vocational education classes, this individual believes ACCESS should place an even greater emphasis on work-related education, training, and experience. A few staff members also identified a need for more professional counseling and psychotherapy.

Most often the staff members we spoke with identified a more formal, structured transition program as their greatest need. All of those we met believe that students typically make a great deal of progress, both behaviorally and academically, during their stay at ACCESS institutions, but many lamented the potential pitfalls that students may encounter once they leave, after three to eight months in most cases, and return to their former, less structured environment. Some students enter one of ACCESS's community schools after release from a juvenile justice institution, and while there is at least some continuity in the education program for these students, the nonresidential community schools do not receive Title I funding. As yet, there is not a system for post-release tracking of students accessible to all ACCESS and Probation Department staff.[3] As noted previously, development of a more structured transition program is one of the most important priorities to Title I and ACCESS administrators.

Program Evaluation and Recommendations for Improvement

The ACCESS program conducts an annual evaluation of its Title I program. Their most recent program evaluation (1997-1998) contains largely descriptive information, including the number of students served by subject area at each facility, the length of stay for Title I students at each facility during the last five years; students' gender, ethnicity, and grade level; and students' assessment scores. The report also identifies program strengths and weaknesses and briefly describes plans for program improvement in the current year.

Instructional assistants are responsible for maintaining the data required for the year-end Title I evaluation report, using a "project data form" that obtains demographic information on targeted students, as well as assessment results. By design, Title I students receive pre- and posttests at all sites. As noted previously, Title I staff members use the pretest information to identify areas in which supplementary instruction might be useful, However, owing to the average length of stay of three months at most sites, few students actually receive a post assessment. Students that did receive a pre- and posttest (Brigance Inventory of Essential Skills) showed an average gain of at least one grade level equivalent.

[3]One of the SEA Title I coordinator's priorities is the development of a statewide system for post-release tracking of students; she is currently considering how to establish an automated database that protects student confidentiality.

California law requires all schools, including ACCESS schools, to assess students in grades two through eleven by May 15 of each fiscal year using a single standardized test (The Stanford 9). The testing program, referred to as the Standardized Testing and Reporting (STAR) Program, was established in 1997. Students at the juvenile court schools were scheduled to take the test the same week we visited the program; however, the test publisher failed to deliver the tests on time and principals and staff were trying to figure out the logistics required to rearrange staff and student schedules to accommodate the postponement.

Several staff members questioned the use of mandatory testing at specific dates for students at juvenile court schools. While they welcomed the accountability implicit in a statewide testing program, many believed that the mobility of their students severely constrains their ability of to accurately measure individual student gains from year to year. Moreover, many of their students have only recently arrived at a facility when they take the six-hour test, and their performance is undoubtedly affected by emotional issues associated with incarceration. Finally, many of the students have limited English abilities, and this factor adversely influenced their test results.

Most of the staff members we spoke with believe the more important, or at least more fundamental, indicator of success for their students is improved behavior. The prevailing view among Title I staff members is that academic improvement is typically preceded by a willingness to learn and an emerging appreciation of the value of education. In the three to four months they are able to work with most of their students, staff members tried to develop such an appreciation in their students and an attitude conducive to learning. As one staff member said, "The best indicator is if students attend class regularly and appear to be motivated to learn." Teachers also monitor the amount and quality of work students complete as indicators of individual student progress and overall programmatic success.

All of those with whom we spoke believe the local Title I program for delinquent youth is critically important. Staff members especially appreciated the flexibility to run programs that address local needs. At the same time, Title I staff members mentioned that the statute and associated guidelines are somewhat confusing, in that Part A is used to support neglected youth served in local institutions while Part D is used for delinquent youth, even though Part D is titled "Neglected and Delinquent."

Polk County School Board
Bartow, Fla.

Program Overview

- The Polk County School Board received $316,000 in program funding for school year 1998-99, which it allocated to eight facilities for delinquent youth to support staff, purchase computers and software, and obtain instructional supplies.
- The district allocates funding to facilities on a strict per pupil basis ($568) and allows each institution to decide how best to use its share.
- On an average day 536 residents of these eight facilities receive program services, with enrollment ranging from 250 students in the largest facility to nine in the smallest.
- The educational program at each facility varies somewhat; typically, students receive 300 minutes of instruction each day, in English, math, social studies, science, physical education, and life management.
- District efforts to evaluate the Subpart 2 program have experienced limited success due to diversity in key dimensions across the eight facilities, the large percentage of residents who arrive from other counties, the short stay of many residents, and a recent change in program leadership.

Polk County covers 2,048 square miles in the center of Florida. An historically rural area, the county's population has increased dramatically during the last 10 years and now includes 459,000 residents (82 percent white, 13 percent African American, and 4 percent Hispanic). The rate of unemployment in the county is 5 percent; 13 percent of all residents live below the poverty level. The county's economy is driven by three main industries: citrus farming, phosphate mining, and tourism. The Polk County School Board (PCSB) is the county's largest employer with an estimated 9,000 employees.

Polk County is the nation's 45th largest school system, serving approximately 75,000 students in grades kindergarten-12. Two-thirds of the students are white, 23 percent African American, 10 percent Hispanic, and 1 percent Asian or Native American. Among the county's 112 schools are a number of alternative educational programs, including eight that serve delinquent youth. Cheap land prices, the county's central location within the state, and the relative lack of public pressure against the construction of detention facilities are among the reasons the county houses so many juvenile detention facilities.

In school year 1998-99, the PCSB received approximately $316,000 in Part D funding. The district retained approximately 5 percent of this amount for indirect costs and allocated the remainder among the eight facilities for delinquent youth.[1] The district determines the amount of funding each facility receives on a strict per pupil basis ($568 per student); the amounts any one facility received varied from a low of $5,112 to a high of $142,000. In the aggregate, participating facilities used Subpart 2 funds to (1) support nine staff persons (seven instructional aides and two transition coordinators); (2) purchase 15 computers and associated hardware and software; and (3) obtain other instructional materials and supplies.

This report presents the findings from our visit to the PCSB in April 1999 to obtain information about the Title I, Part D, Subpart 2 program. We collected information about the program through a telephone interview with the state educational agency Title I coordinator, a two-day visit to the school district, and review of program documentation. Individuals we interviewed in Polk County included the Title I supervisor and the manager of the Subpart 2 program, the director of student services, the coordinator of alternative education, the lead teachers at two facilities, and a Title I funded transition specialist.

Program Goals and Design

The district's Title I supervisor identified academic improvement as the overarching goal of the Part D program in Polk County. A secondary purpose of the program is to help students move out of detention and into further schooling or employment. Most of the students residing in area detention facilities will not return to county schools upon release,[2] and Title I staff elect not to use any program funds to provide dropout prevention services in the regular public schools, because the school board already provides these services.

Title I staff afford the eight institutions that receive program funds broad discretion in use of these resources to improve students' academic achievement. As we describe in some detail in subsequent sections of this report, the facilities that receive Subpart 2 funds vary with respect to overall goals, administrative structure, staffing, size, characteristics of students served, and

[1] Another new facility will receive program funding next year.

[2] Many detained youth arrive from Orlando or Tampa. The juvenile court system sentences these youth to detention in Polk County in an effort to avoid concentrating members of specific urban gangs in city facilities.

programs offered. Moreover, several of the eight facilities initiated operations only within the last few years. In light of the recent establishment of several facilities and the diversity across all eight institutions in key dimensions, district staff do not believe it appropriate to prescribe how each facility uses its Subpart 2 allocation. Rather, the district allocates Subpart 2 funds to each facility based solely on the number of residents and, with some caveats, allows facility staff to decide how best to use the funding.

At the facility level, debate concerning the use of program funds typically focuses on whether to hire additional instructional staff or purchase computers and associated software. If facility staff elect to use Subpart 2 funding for computers and software, the district's Alternative Education staff strongly encourage them to acquire a specific type of software, the *New Century Integrated Instructional System*. This software is being used by school districts throughout the state because it aligns with recently implemented statewide performance standards (i.e., Sunshine Standards) that identify the knowledge and skills students are expected to know at certain grade levels and a statewide test (Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test or FCAT) that assesses student performance against these standards.[3] As we describe in later sections of the report, most of the facilities have used at least a portion of their Subpart 2 funding to acquire this system.

Many factors affect facility-level decisions regarding expenditure of program funds, including the total numbers of students served (and thus the amount of Subpart 2 funding received), characteristics of the facility itself, and availability of other resources for the educational program. The number of residents at two of the facilities is so small that the amount of program funding is inadequate to support even a single staff person. Thus, these facilities use their Subpart 2 allocation for computers and instructional supplies.

Other factors may also influence facility decisions governing use of program resources. For example, one of the facilities we visited is run by a private for-profit company under contract to the Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ), and the PCSB supplies educational staff to this facility through a cooperative agreement. The lead teacher at this facility decided to use their program allotment to pay the salaries of two aides rather than to purchase much-needed computer hardware and software primarily because of the structure of facility programs. The facility operates three programs serving three different groups of youths who are housed and must

[3]The FCAT requirement became effective in 1996.

remain in different areas of the facility. Any new hardware would necessarily be unavailable to two-thirds of these youth, while instructional aides are free to move from one area of the facility to another to serve all residents. Thus, using the funds for staff ensures that all students benefit from the program.

The district's Title I and Alternative Education staff are considering changing the way in which the school board allocates funding to each facility and tightening somewhat the flexibility currently afforded institutions in deciding how to use program funds. A private company, which operates the district's largest facility (also one of the newest among the eight facilities), received $142,000 in Subpart 2 funds but failed to expend its entire allotment as planned. At the same time, several older facilities in the district have needs for staff members and equipment that far exceed available funding. As a result of this situation, district staff are debating whether to consider the relative need of each facility in allocating funds, rather than giving each institution an amount commensurate with the percentage of the district total its residents generate. The Title I supervisor plans to discuss this possible change in the program with the state educational agency later this year.

Students and Student Selection

All students in all eight facilities are eligible for Title I services. In October, when the district obtains its caseload data for federal reporting purposes, the Polk County program served 536 students residing in county facilities for delinquent youth. Table 1 summarizes the average number of students who resided at each facility at that time, the number who received Title I services, and the percentage of residents who arrived at each facility from outside the county.

Due to variable lengths of stay at participating facilities, ranging from a few days up to one year, the total number of youth detained at each facility throughout the year is much higher than the count indicated in the table, which is based on 30 consecutive days of residence. Also, although all residents are eligible for Title I services, many do not receive services owing to their

Table 1: Average Number of Residents and Students, and Percentage From Other Counties, by Facility

Facility	*Average Number of Residents*	*Average Number of Students*	*Percentage from Outside the County*
Bartow Youth Training Center	73	74	67%
Boot Camp	95	86	15%
Youth Villa	22	25	50%
Bradley Manor	39	17	30%
Youth Shelter	10	9	85%
Sabal Palms	350	250	95%
Polk House	28	26	10%
Regional Detention Center	115	49	10%

short stay (i.e., less than 30 days), especially at the detention center where many youth reside pending assignment to another facility.[4]

Program Structure and Staffing

The manager of the Subpart 2 program is in her first year on the job, having previously worked in the district as a high school principal. She handles all day-to-day management responsibilities, reporting to the district's overall Title I supervisor as necessary. She helps facility staff plan their programs and provides on-site technical assistance. The program manager spends about 25 percent of her time on the Subpart 2 program, with the remainder allocated to her responsibilities as the district's Title I Migrant program manager.

The PCSB is ultimately responsible for the regular educational program at each juvenile delinquent facility in the district, while the state's Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) is responsible for the overall operation of each facility. Relations between the eight facilities and

[4]Data on the number of students served throughout the entire year, as well as aggregate counts of students by gender and ethnicity, were not available.

the PCSB staff are governed by the terms of several cooperative agreements and contracts with the state or the organizations contracted by the state to operate specific facilities, including the county sheriff's office and private companies. Responsibilities of each party specific to Title I programs are governed by the terms of addenda to these contracts and cooperative agreements.

Educational services at each facility may be delivered directly by employees of the PCSB's Alternative Education Department, the sheriff's office, private companies who operate some of the facilities, or the state. When the school board directly provides the educational staff at a facility, a cooperative agreement articulates the relationship between the board and other organizations, while the district uses contracts with facilities where other organizations directly deliver the education program. We briefly summarize below the administrative structure of each participating facility, the types of youth served, the number of instructional staff, and the amount and uses of Subpart 2 funding.

- **Bartow Youth Training Center** is a wilderness center located on 240 acres. Operated by a private for-profit company (Correctional Services Corporation) the center serves males aged 14-18 who are committed to detention by the juvenile court system. The center operates three distinct programs: (1) a halfway house for 24 youths with an average length of stay between four and six months; (2) an intensive halfway house for 20 youths with an average stay between six and nine months, and (3) a serious habitual offender program for 30 youths with an average stay between nine and 12 months. Four teachers and four aides with the county school board provide youth in all three programs with five hours of educational services per day. The center used $42,032 in Subpart 2 funds to support two of the instructional aides (referred to as "adjudicated youth assistants") and to purchase test materials.

- **Polk County Juvenile Boot Camp** is a structured, secure residential program emphasizing paramilitary courtesy and bearing, physical and mental discipline, and "pro-social" activities for male and female offenders aged 14-17. The education program at the camp is delivered by five teachers and five paraprofessionals (i.e., instructional aides) employed by the school board through a cooperative agreement with the sheriff's office, which runs the camp. Students in grades 7-12 are served in five classrooms. The camp used its Subpart 2 allocation of approximately $49,000 to support a transition facilitator and to purchase instructional supplies.

- **Sheriff's Youth Villa,** originally established as a child care institution for dependent and neglected children, now provides residential and remedial education services for delinquent males and females, 8-18 years old. The sheriff's office, which operates the facility, supplies two teachers. The Villa used $14,200 in program funding to partially support a tutor, under the terms of a contract with the PCSB. The Florida Sheriff's

Youth Ranches organization provides the balance of the salary and benefits for this position.

- **Bradley Manor** is a short-term residential program for males between 14-17 years old who are committed to detention for level six (felony) crimes. Operated by the Agency for Community Treatment Services, the objective of the facility is to provide a structured therapeutic environment through a comprehensive program of behavior management, counseling, education, and transition planning. The school board supplies the educational staff at Bradley Manor (three teachers and two aides) through a cooperative agreement with the state. The facility spent its Part D allocation of $9,656 on two computers, associated software, and other instructional supplies.

- **Cornerstone Youth Shelter** provides temporary refuge for male and female youth, ages 9-17, who have run away from home, have been asked to leave by parents/guardians, or who are awaiting adjudication. The PCSB supplies the one teacher at this facility through a cooperative agreement. The shelter used $5,112 in program funding to purchase a computer and software.

- **Sabal Palms Youth Development Center** is operated by the Correctional Service Corporation under contract with the state as a secured residential facility for up to 350 adjudicated youth. The contractor directly provides educational services at the center, employing 28 teachers and three paraprofessionals. The contractor used $53,000 of its total allocation of $142,000 in program funds to purchase 12 computers, software, and other instructional supplies under the terms of a cooperative agreement with the PCSB. The school board allocated the remaining amount ($89,000) on contract for the purpose of hiring additional paraprofessionals (aides) to serve as tutors in the classroom.

- **Polk House** is a moderate-risk residential program for males, aged 14-18, that is directly operated by the DJJ, and the **Polk Regional Detention Center** is a DJJ facility that serves juveniles who are awaiting either a judicial decision or placement in a commitment program. These two facilities are adjacent to one another and share personnel. Educational staff at the two facilities, including 14 teachers and six paraprofessionals, are DJJ employees. Under a contract with the school board, the facilities used their combined allocation of roughly $42,000 to fund a transition specialist who serves students who have completed the Polk House program and to purchase instructional supplies for students at both facilities.

Overall, PCSB employees deliver educational services at four of the eight facilities that currently receive program funding, the DJJ employs its own staff at two institutions, the sheriff's office at one facility, and a private company at one facility. At facilities where other than PCSB staff deliver educational services, the role of district staff is limited to monitoring and oversight.

Ideally, Alternative Education staff would prefer that their own employees provide services at all institutions, because they maintain responsibility for the overall quality of educational programs. However, it is less expensive for the private companies to hire their own employees because they need not be union members and may work longer hours. Citing these incentives, the lead teacher at one facility we visited (a county employee) expressed uncertainty regarding whether the school board will continue to directly provide the educational services at the facility in future years. This is a factor that complicates long-term planning and resource allocation decisions. Notwithstanding district preference, PCSB staff members report that relationships between the school board and the organizations that operate the facilities continue to be strong and cooperative.

Program Services and Activities

The specific services and activities available to residents at any one of the eight facilities that receive program funding vary based on the overall goals of the facility. However, the basic educational program is essentially the same across all institutions. As an example, the educational program at one of the facilities we visited consists of 300 minutes of instruction for each youth per day. Subjects include English, mathematics, social studies, science, physical education, and life management skills. All facilities also offer general equivalency diploma preparation classes.

Students at the Bartow center take the Test of Adult Basic Education (TABE) five days after arrival at the facility to identify achievement levels and provide staff with some of the information needed to develop an individual lesson plan.[5] Treatment teams, consisting of counselors (e.g., substance abuse, psychological), teachers, a representative of Correctional Service Corporation, and others as appropriate, convene weekly to monitor students' progress in following lesson plans, as well as in meeting behavioral objectives established by facility staff. Educational staff members at the facility include the lead teacher, who acts as an assistant principal, and three classroom teachers, one for each of the three programs operated at Bartow center (i.e., halfway house, intensive halfway house, and serious habitual offender program).

[5]The five-day interim period between arrival and testing is designed to avoid testing students while the emotional impact of incarceration is likely to affect performance.

The instructional staff also includes four aides, two of whom are funded by Title I, Part D. One of the instructional aides, or adjudicated youth assistants, funded by Title I works with students at the halfway house, providing instruction from 8 a.m. until 2 p.m. each day. Remedial instruction in reading and math is through a pull-out design, often outdoors at a picnic table or by the pond on the facility's grounds. The other Title I-funded aide teaches two, two-hour computer-assisted learning classes and one period of physical education each day for students in the serious habitual offender program.[6] In the computer lab, half of the students work independently on their reading and math skills for one hour on computers, while the aide provides the other students with individual or small group instruction. In the second hour of the class, students who worked with computers during the first hour work with the aide, while the other students work in computer-assisted instruction.

Prior to release from the Bartow center, each student participates in a transitional exit conference with the treatment team and in some cases with a representative of the school the student will attend to coordinate the student's reentry. At this conference the student is able to express his or her preference for continuing formal education after release from an institution. Facility staff members gather all of the student's records (i.e., TABE scores, credits earned, and report cards) to pass on to the receiving school. By law, any student released from a commitment program must reenter the school system through the Florida Department of Juvenile Justice, which holds a reentry hearing. Moreover, all youth under age 18 are required to attend a three-month aftercare program upon leaving a facility, regardless of their future plans.[7] The exit conference helps prepare the student for the state reentry hearing, the aftercare program, and any further schooling the student intends to pursue.

We also visited the Polk County Juvenile Boot Camp, a partnership between the county sheriff's office, the DJJ, the PCSB, and local citizens. The boot camp accepts males and females aged 14 to 18 who have been adjudicated guilty by the juvenile justice system. The camp's program combines rigorous military-style physical training with academic instruction, vocational training, and psychological counseling. The experience lasts 12 months: six months in the basic

[6]This individual is studying for certification as a physical education teacher.

[7]One objective of the DJJ-operated aftercare program is to assist students obtain employment.

boot camp, three months in an on-site transition program, and three months in the aftercare program.

Student movement through the six-month boot camp and three-month transition program is carefully structured and monitored. Students in the basic program progress through three levels of behavioral and educational achievement, and, if successful, proceed through another three levels during the transition component of the program.[8] At entry into the facility, students attend an initial treatment plan meeting that sets forth the individual's academic and behavioral objectives. Drill instructors, teachers, counselors and other facility staff members document student achievement against these objectives and meet with individual students each week to discuss progress and plan next steps. In the transition program, where between 15-18 students reside at any given time, staff members document student achievement daily, using a checklist of 25 items addressing all aspects of student development.

School board staff provide educational services at the camp through a cooperative agreement with the sheriff's office. Five teachers and five paraprofessionals serve a total of 95 students in grades 7-12. These employees direct students' work in math, English, science, social studies, physical education, and health and peer counseling, using both standard and computerized curriculum. Other services at the camp include substance abuse prevention, mental health counseling, parenting skills, therapy, and family counseling.

The Title I-funded transition leader, whose prior experience includes being the lead teacher at the camp, is a key member of the student planning and monitoring teams. She is responsible for intake and scheduling student activities, obtaining records from students' home schools, administration of standardized tests, and assisting students prepare for their reentry hearings upon release from the facility's transition program. She sees every one of the students informally on a daily basis, usually when they are in the computer lab adjacent to her office.

The transition specialist formally meets with every student regularly to help students decide on their post-release goals, develop a transition plan, and otherwise prepare for reentry. Students may also submit written requests to schedule ad hoc meetings, as necessary. She uses a variety of diagnostic tools to help students identify their interests and abilities, relying primarily on the New Century system for academic assessment and planning, and the Quest inventory for

[8] Students wear different colored hats to signal their level of achievement.

vocational planning. Her work with each student depends on that individual's specific goals. Some students plan to reenter the regular public schools, other want to attend an alternative school to obtain a general equivalency diploma, and still other students plan to enroll in a vocational program after release.

The transition specialist and the lead teacher agree that the boot camp is an effective approach to education for adjudicated youth. They believe that the program's emphasis on discipline is highly effective. They also noted that the facility's psychiatric and psychological services, provided by an outside agency via contract, are also effective in addressing students' underlying emotional issues. As a result, they are able to focus 100 percent of their energy on academic instruction, a factor they believe underlies the average two grade level equivalent gain that students at the camp achieve. Both also agree that the New Century software is an effective instructional approach for their students.

All but one of the facilities that receive Subpart 2 funding use the New Century integrated instructional software system as part of their instructional approach. The software includes a diagnostic component; a curriculum component for mathematics, reading, language arts, and writing; and a management component that enables instructional staff to tailor the system to individual and program requirements. As noted earlier, many school districts throughout Florida are now using this system to track student achievement against recently adopted statewide standards for curriculum content and assessment.

The diagnostic component identifies a student's current level of achievement in various content areas (i.e., mathematics, reading, language arts) and then sets up an individual program of instruction appropriate for that level. Assessments, in the form of brief tests in the student's program, permit continuous tracking of student progress. Teachers use the results to adjust the instructional plan. Each lesson teaches students a concept through a series of tutorials, guided practice, and independent practice. The management system software provides teachers with reports on individual student progress, including the results of individual lessons, cumulative gains, current grade level, and time on task. Using this information, teachers may override the automatic lesson plan and create customized assignments as necessary.

Program Evaluation and Recommendations for Improvement

District Alternative Education staff report that the success of the overall education program in assisting students improve academically varies from facility to facility. They acknowledge that current information collection practices preclude accurate, comprehensive, districtwide assessment of student progress. Impediments to more rigorous evaluation include the number and diversity of facilities located in the district, several new facilities without data, the large percentage of students who arrive (without documentation of their academic performance) from outside the county, and the short stay of many facility residents. Moreover, the Subpart 2 program manager is in her first year on the job and is still becoming familiar with the specific operations of the eight, soon to be nine, facilities that receive funding. The district's Title I supervisor and Alternative Education staff agree that improved data collection and evaluation are a major priority for the coming year.

One of the difficulties faced by school board staff in ensuring the quality of all education programs serving delinquent youth in the county is that the various organizations that operate the facilities typically do not actively seek comments from the school board on the design of a facility's overall program, or on how the educational component might best support the facility's broader mission. The juvenile justice system's focus is necessarily on behavioral change, and for the most part the educational program supports and complements behavioral objectives. However, the behavioral plan and the educational plan are not always entirely consistent, and in the event of a conflict between individual members of facility treatment teams, the justice system's perspective invariably wins out, according to facility staff with whom we spoke.

District staff are striving to address current variability that exists across institutions with respect to accountability for student achievement. They report that where accountability has been an issue during the last few years, they have encouraged facilities to acquire the New Century system in an effort to implement a means of generating more continuity and uniformity in the types of information collected on student performance. Where accountability is in place, they have encouraged an increased emphasis on transition.

All students at all facilities are pre and posttested either through the New Century system or the TABE. A five-day waiting period before students are allowed to take the initial TABE is required by quality assurance standards for juvenile justice commitment programs, and reflects a recent revision to state policy intended to allow students to adjust to incarceration before

measuring academic achievement levels. As a result of the new policy, entry scores have increased; consequently, overall student gains have decreased. Despite the new policy on net gains, all of the school board and facility staff with whom we spoke believe the waiting period ensures a more accurate initial assessment and more appropriate lesson plans.

Many of the individuals we spoke with at the district and facility level identified improvements in students' behavior and attitude as a prerequisite to academic improvement, and while they see such changes occur on an informal basis, they are not aware of any means to measure these improvements in a uniform fashion. While they welcome increased accountability, as represented by the Sunshine Standards and the Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test, district staff believe that students in these eight facilities are unlikely to achieve at the same rate as their noninstitutionalized peers, owing to the relatively higher incidence of academic deficits and underlying behavior problems. Nevertheless, district staff believe that all students should demonstrate some level of academic improvement while residing in area facilities, and they remain confident that once fully implemented, the New Century system will generate the information needed to fully document individual student gains. Moreover, the uniformity of information the system will provide across institutions will help address the problem of student mobility and ensure some level of continuity in each student's education as he or she moves into and out of county institutions and schools.

Unified School District 493
Columbus, Kan.

Program Overview

- Unified School District 493 used its 1998-99 Subpart 2 grant of $35,592 to hire a certified teacher and a certified aide to operate an alternative classroom at the local high school.
- This year the program has served 58 students who are either on the verge of suspension or at risk academically, including 24 females who reside at Elms Acres Youth Home, a temporary placement for adolescent girls.
- Individual instruction in the alternative classroom focuses on the core subjects of reading, math, and language arts; elective classes are coordinated with regular classroom teachers.
- Students in the alternative classroom earn the privilege of reentering the regular high school through a points system that rewards appropriate behavior and academic improvement.

Columbus, Kan., the seat of government for Cherokee County, is a small, rural community with a population of approximately 3,500. The per capita income in Cherokee County is $16,561; the rate of unemployment has averaged 7 percent during the last decade. Major employers in the county include manufacturing, retail, and government. Nine percent of the labor force works in agriculture.

Columbus's Unified School District (USD) 493 operates a total of seven schools: six elementary (one serves students in grades kindergarten through eight) and one high school. The district serves approximately 1,442 students in grades pre-kindergarten through 12 (95 percent white, 3 percent Native American, 1 percent African American, 1 percent Hispanic, and 1 percent Asian American). Forty-six percent of district students are from economically disadvantaged homes.

In 1998-99, the Kansas State Department of Education (KSDE) distributed $445,378 in Title I, Part D, Subpart 2 funds, on a formula basis, to eight eligible school districts. To be eligible for a Subpart 2 grant, a district must house at least 5 percent of Kansas' delinquent student population in local correctional facilities. The school district's eligibility for Subpart 2 funds depends on enrollment at the Elms Acres Youth Home, a temporary placement for adolescent girls (grades 7-12) removed from their homes by the courts because of truancy, a dysfunctional family life, abuse, or trouble with the law. According to the district's director of

consolidated programs, all of the girls are included in the delinquent count (or classified as delinquent) because they are wards of the state.

The district first received a Subpart 2 grant in 1996-97, and used the money to hire a certified teacher to tutor several young women at Elms Acres. In 1997-98, the district did not qualify for Subpart 2 funds because the October enrollment at Elms Acres the prior year did not meet the state's eligibility criteria. For the current year (1998-99), USD 493 received a Subpart 2 grant of $35,592. The director of consolidated programs recently learned that the district will receive funding again next year, based on this year's October enrollment.

The district used this year's allotment to pay a full-time certified teacher and a full-time certified aide to operate an alternative classroom at the local high school.[1] The alternative classroom is a temporary placement for students who are either: (1) on the verge of suspension for disruptive behavior in the classroom or (2) failing to complete assignments and falling behind in their academic work. The primary goal of the alternative classroom program is to provide a disciplinary placement with a strong academic focus, in lieu of suspending the student from school.

This report describes USD 493's activities under the Title I, Part D, Subpart 2 program. We collected information about the program from three sources: (1) a telephone interview with the Kansas Title I consultant, (2) a site visit to the district in April 1999, and (3) a review of program documentation, including the district's application for Subpart 2 funds. During our visit we interviewed the district's director of consolidated programs (who also serves as the district's business manager and works half-time as a guidance counselor at the high school), the vice principal of the high school, and the full-time teacher of the alternative classroom.

Program Goals and Design

KSDE does not have a statewide strategy for Subpart 2 programs, although it strongly encourages districts to target those students in greatest need of academic assistance. Kansas has curriculum standards in reading, writing, math, social studies, and science, which all state-accredited schools must follow, including all institutional educational programs that apply for

[1]The school just received verification of its Subpart 2 funding for the 1999-2000 school year. Until they received this notification, they were unable to notify the alternative classroom staff of the status of their jobs. However, there was enough funding for the 1999-2000 school year to secure their jobs for another year.

and receive accreditation. Kansas's Title I consultant for Part D programs indicated that the KSDE becomes involved in the planning of local programs only at the request of the district, or to help resolve problems.

The district's primary goals for its Subpart 2 program are to (1) improve the academic achievement of at-risk students in grades 9 through 12 and (2) prevent these students from dropping out of school. Another goal is to help these students learn how to succeed, both behaviorally and academically, in the regular classroom environment. The alternative classroom at the high school is designed to meet these goals.

The district coordinator for consolidated programs, the high school principal, and the district superintendent worked together to develop the concept of the alternative classroom when several of the girls from Elms Acres experienced disciplinary problems.[2] The Elms Acres girls were often behind in their credits and many had not attended school regularly prior to coming to Elms Acres. Consequently, the director of consolidated programs and the principal originally envisioned the classroom as a type of transition program, in which all of the Elms Acres girls would first be assigned to prepare them behaviorally and academically for the regular high school. However, they quickly realized that requiring all of the Elms Acres girls to enter the high school through the transition classroom would discriminate against those girls who were already capable of handling the regular classroom. In addition, they recognized that disciplinary problems at the high school were not limited to the Elms Acres girls. Therefore, they broadened the concept of the program to target all high school students experiencing behavioral and academic difficulty in the regular classrooms.

The alternative classroom provides students with an opportunity to continue their regular academic studies (with an emphasis on the core subjects of English, math, and science) in a more structured and individual setting. Students assigned to the alternative classroom for disciplinary reasons must earn the privilege to reenter their regular classes by exhibiting appropriate behavior and maintaining academic progress while in the alternative classroom. Staff monitor student behavior using a detailed point system.[3]

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[2]The 1997-98 academic year was the first year that all of the girls at the home attended the regular public schools in the district. Prior to that year, the more difficult students were educated on site at Elms Acres by a tutor.

[3]Students assigned to the alternative classroom for purely academic reasons are not subject to the point system.

The district's decision to use Subpart 2 funds to support an alternative classroom at the high school was not based on a formal needs assessment. Instead, administrators at the high school merely saw a need for a program to address some of the behavioral and academic problems that surfaced. In addition, while the district had already established at-risk programs for elementary and junior high school students, it lacked an at-risk program for high school students. District staff viewed the Subpart 2 grant as an opportunity to fill this gap.

Students in the alternative classroom follow the same academic curriculum that they would in their regular classrooms. The point system used in the alternative classroom was adapted from a similar system employed by the district's alternative program for behavior-disordered students, which proved effective.

Students and Student Selection

The alternative classroom targets first students who are on the verge of being suspended for disciplinary reasons, and second, students who are falling behind academically. The vice principal decides which students to assign to the alternative classroom, based on a variety of factors, including the number of referrals a student has received for being tardy or for other reasons, and the student's academic progress in the classroom. He does not use a set formula (such as a certain number of referrals) for assigning students to the alternative classroom, and he tries to explore other forms of discipline first, such as detention, Saturday school, or a short-term, in-school suspension. In the hierarchy of disciplinary actions, assignment to the alternative classroom occurs before an out-of-school suspension. The typical disciplinary assignment to the alternative classroom is for 10 days.

Average daily attendance in the alternative classroom ranges from five to 10 students. Since the program began operating last fall, it has served a total of 58 students; 24 students (41 percent) have been girls from the Elms Acres Youth Home. Of the 58 students served so far, 53 percent are male and 47 percent are female.

Program Structure and Staffing

In the 1998-99 school year, USD 493 used its entire Subpart 2 grant to staff the alternative classroom for at-risk students with one certified teacher and one aide. The aide has a

teaching degree but is not certified by the state of Kansas. All other expenses for the alternative classroom, such as books, computers, and other supplies are paid through the district's general education fund, which includes both state and local funding. The district does not use any other federal funds to support this program.

The alternative classroom is located in a separate building across the street from the high school. The building formerly housed a convenience store and remained vacant for a number of years until the former superintendent of the district convinced the store chain to donate the building to the high school. Despite its location in a separate building, the alternative classroom is a part of the high school's daily education program, and a student placed in the alternative classroom continues to work on his or her regular classroom assignments. The essential difference is that instruction in the alternative classroom is individualized and is more carefully monitored by the teacher and aide.

Students who are placed in the alternative classroom are isolated from the entire student population of the high school. While in the classroom, students cannot talk to one another or to any other member of the high school. They are not allowed to eat lunch with the high school students, attend school assemblies (pep rallies, concerts, etc.), or to enter the regular school building for any reason during their placement. Also, while in the alternative classroom, students may be placed in isolation booths (located in the corner of the room) if they display behavior problems and cause classroom disruptions. Isolated students continue to receive individual instruction and work toward exiting the classroom and returning to the main building.

Once assigned to the classroom, students earn their way back into the main building by earning points for behavior and grades. They receive a maximum of 10 points every class period[4] for exhibiting each of the following behaviors: (1) use of appropriate language; (2) being on time; (3) coming prepared; (4) remaining on schedule with the given tasks; (5) following instructions; (6) doing quality work; and (7) cooperating with teachers and peers. On average, a student is expected to earn 4,750 points before exiting the classroom. Adhering to this point system, a student can earn a maximum of 490 points a day and exit the alternative classroom in about 10 days. However, a student can earn the required number of points in 15 days or more by

[4]The alternative classroom operates on an hourly basis just for points; otherwise, it does not use hourly periods. Students are allowed to work at their own pace.

successfully completing academic assignments and not improving behavior. In this situation, the exiting student must sign a form acknowledging his or her return to the regular high school. If the student encounters any additional behavioral or academic problems, the alternative classroom is no longer an option and the student is suspended from the high school.

There is no cooperative agreement between the high school and the Elms Acres Youth Home. Girls who reside at the youth home are under legal guardianship of Elms Acres, and as residents of the district, they are eligible to attend classes at the high school. There is minimal, incidental contact between the alternative classroom and the juvenile justice system. On occasion, a student who has been placed on probation by the courts for some type of previous criminal offense will be in the classroom and if the student experiences discipline or attendance problems while in the classroom, the vice principal informs the student's parole officer of the situation.

When Elms Acres girls first enroll at the high school, school staff are responsible for obtaining the girls' previous academic records. The staff identifies the high school the girl most recently attended and attempts to obtain her school records, a process that is often time consuming. The only records that Elms Acres is required to present to the high school at the time of a girl's enrollment is a copy of her immunization records. The high school makes no effort to track the progress of the Elms Acres girls or other students who leave the high school (and the alternative classroom) without graduating. However, the high school faculty track the progress of its graduating seniors, as we discuss later in this report.

District and school personnel involved in administrating and operating the Subpart 2 program include the district's program director for the consolidated plan, the vice principal of the high school, and the alternative classroom teacher and aide. The district's program director for the consolidated plan oversees all of the Subpart 2 funding activities for the district, and develops the application for obtaining Subpart 2 funding.[5] The vice principal spends approximately 10 percent of his time on matters related to the alternative classroom, including assigning students to the classroom and handling any discipline problems encountered. When a student is selected for placement in the classroom, the vice principal meets with the student to explain its

[5]Two years ago, the state of Kansas combined all of its federally funded programs (Title 1, At-Risk, Title VI, etc.) into one consolidated program.

purpose rules, and point system, and asks the student to sign a form documenting his or her understanding of the rules of the placement. When the program started, he spent a lot of time meeting with the parents of students who were placed in the alternative classroom explaining to them its concept, function, and purpose. He noted that parent questions have decreased considerably since program initiation.

The alternative classroom teacher and aide dedicate 100 percent of their time to Subpart 2 priorities, providing individual instruction and monitoring students' behavior, attendance, and academic progress. The alternative classroom teacher also coordinates each student's daily assignments with his or her regular teachers by asking them to complete a daily assignment sheet for each class. The alternative classroom teacher has daily contact with each student's regular teachers to ensure that all staff are aware of all student assignments and progress. If she has questions concerning a student's assignments from a regular teacher, she meets with that teacher either before school or during the lunch period. Such coordination between the alternative and regular classroom teachers helps students make the transition back into regular classes by ensuring that they are up to date on the same subject material as their classmates.

Students exit the alternative classroom through a simple process. A student signs an exit form and the teacher provides the student's regular teachers with a copy of all the student's work. However, the exiting process is sometimes abrupt for some of the young women from Elms Acres, especially when they move to another detention placement or to foster care outside of the district. The alternative classroom teacher stated that sometimes she was not notified when this happened and so no transfer of academic records or tracking of the student was possible.

Program Services and Activities

Alternative classroom instruction emphasizes the core subjects of the high school's curriculum, language arts, reading, and mathematics. The staff used general education funds to purchase teacher edition textbooks (especially math). The alternative classroom has one computer and one printer that students must share because they are not allowed to enter the high school building. The teacher, as the lone instructor in the alternative classroom, teaches all classes including electives such as woodworking, music, and art, for which she is admittedly not fully qualified to teach. The students' elective teachers in the regular high school give her

student assignments, but they typically consist of exercises from textbooks that do not coincide with the instruction students in the regular classroom receive. This is a problem that the high school wants to address, but the focus of the class will remain on the core subjects because they are the ones the students must master in order to graduate.

Another important part of the high school's education program used in the alternative classroom is the Accelerated Reader Program. The district uses this program due to its concerns over the poor reading ability of many students; one sophomore class tested at the seventh grade reading level recently. The Accelerated Reader Program is a diagnostic program; students take a test to determine their reading level and teachers then assign appropriate reading material. Students answer a series of questions on each book they read. To help all students develop their reading skills, one class period each day at the high school is set aside for silent reading. This daily class counts toward the points system.

Program Evaluation and Recommendations for Improvement

Although only in its first year of operation, the alternative classroom has had positive effects, according to members of the high school's faculty. They see it as a more productive alternative for at-risk students than suspension. While unable to track the long-term progress of its students; in the short term, the alternative classroom believes a placement is successful if the student reenters the regular classroom, and is current on academic work. The high school staff follow the progress of its graduates through a mail survey. Each graduate receives a survey one year after graduation, and a similar survey five years after graduation soliciting information on the person's educational and employment status.

When asked what could be done to improve the program, the alternative classroom teacher said that she would like to see the students enter the class at an earlier age to develop study skills. She would also like to spend an entire day at Elms Acres when a girl is first placed in her class, and observe how Elms Acres staff interact with the girls. She believes this experience would help her better communicate with Elms Acres girls in the alternative classroom, especially those who are new Columbus Unified High School students.

The teacher also stated that the students could benefit from having more computers and having at least one computer networked, so she could send the regular teachers e-mail messages

concerning the students' assignments. This would save her time by not having to meet with the teachers before school and during the lunch period. She would also like to have more training for herself and the aide. She feels that the staff could benefit from training that would develop their skills in dealing with difficult students and possible volatile situations.[6] Another recommendation she offered was to survey the regular high school teachers about students' academic and behavioral status upon exiting the alternative classroom and reentering the regular classroom.

[6]The vice principal is considering providing the staff with MANDT training, a program that addresses disruptive students and volatile situations.

Jefferson County Public Schools
Louisville, Ky.

Program Overview

- The Jefferson County School District used $95,644 in Subpart 2 funds for school year 1998-99 to fund a full-time teacher at an alternative high school, purchase instructional materials for an alternative middle school, and support part-time tutors at six group homes for youth returning from detention facilities.
- Last year the program served a total of 1,300 students--approximately 650 on any given day.
- The Subpart 2 funded high school teacher runs Project Reality, an enrichment program that helped 34 students with severe behavioral problems or a history of involvement with the juvenile justice system to develop a work ethic, employment skills, and community awareness.
- At the alternative junior and senior high schools, students sign contracts with parents and the school that spell out the conditions under which they may return to their home schools.
- The district has not formally evaluated its Subpart 2 program; difficulty identifying an appropriate methodology for assessing the effect of part-time tutoring services is one impediment.

Jefferson County Public Schools (JCPS) is the largest school district in Kentucky, and the 26th largest in the country. Serving an area that includes Louisville (with a population of about 300,000), JCPS has 88 elementary schools, 26 middle schools, 18 high schools, and about 18 "special schools." The "special schools" include alternative schools for children and youth who have committed serious violations of the student code of conduct; been involved with fighting, weapons, assaults on staff, drugs, or alcohol; or been suspended three times. About one-third of the county's children are non-white (mostly African American); 24 percent live below the poverty level.

Kentucky distributed a total of $393,031 in Title I, Part D, Subpart 2 funds, by formula, to 12 school districts in FY '99, with grants ranging from $8,037 to $95,646.[1] The latter amount went to JCPS; however, the district's funding will drop to around $50,000 in FY 2000 because the only juvenile detention facility in the area, Jefferson County Youth Services (JCYS), failed to turn in its count form this year. According to our state-level contact, most local educational

[1] Nineteen districts had eligible students. However, if administrators had distributed funds to all 19, some would have received grants of less than $6,000. According to our state-level contact, districts usually need to receive grants of around $10,000 in order to justify the financial reporting and monitoring involved.

agencies used their funds for districtwide programs. One allocated all of its Subpart 2 money to the local delinquent facility; another paid for half of a school nurse's position.

With its grant, the JCPS:

- **Funded one full-time teaching position** at Buechel Metropolitan High School, an alternative school whose focus is on behavior modification;
- **Purchased instructional materials** (computers and integrated learning software) for Kennedy Metro School, an alternative middle school; and
- **Placed a part-time tutor** at each of six group homes for youth returning from detention facilities.

We visited the JCPS in March 1999 and met with the district's two Title 1 specialists, who are jointly responsible for the Subpart 2 program. We also spoke with: (1) a representative of the Kentucky State Department of Education's Title I office; (2) the principals of both Buechel and Kennedy; and (3) Buechel's Occupational Work Experience (OWE) instructor (whose position is funded by Subpart 2). The site visit also included a brief tour of Buechel.

Program Goals and Design

Aside from requirements in the federal legislation, Kentucky does not impose any requirements concerning goals, services, curricula, targeting, training, technical assistance, or agreements with local facilities on Subpart 2 programs. Respondents stressed that the JCPS program does not focus on dropout prevention. At the alternative schools, the goal is to transition students back to their regular schools. At the group homes, Subpart 2 provides tutoring to improve the academic achievement of students who attend various Jefferson County schools during the day.

The two Title I specialists are not involved in program planning; however, they report that district personnel consult with group home administrators to determine what services are needed at the facilities. The principals of Buechel and Kennedy make their own decisions about how to use the money they receive. (Buechel received about $46,000 to cover the salary and benefits of one-full time teacher, while Kennedy got $8,000.)

At the district level, administrators decided that alternative schools were a high priority for funding. At the school level:

- **Buechel**[2] designed "Project Reality," an enrichment program for adjudicated students whose goal is to help develop students' work ethic, employment skills, and community awareness.

- **Kennedy** (in its first year of Subpart 2 funding) used its allocation to purchase hardware and software for two integrated learning systems (SuccessMaker, designed by Computer Curriculum Corporation) to add to those it already had.

Kennedy's principal observed that the amount of funding he received would have paid for only part of an instructional assistant, and that he did not like to depend on "soft" funds to support staff positions. He also noted that the distinguishing feature of all children at his school, both African American and white, was that all were poor. He said, "We don't know how to teach poor kids. They have so much other baggage." As an example, he described one child referred to Kennedy whose difficulties at the affluent sending school derived from his discomfort with his surroundings and fellow students. The student was the child of former sharecroppers who had only recently moved to a home with indoor plumbing.

Students and Student Selection

According to the district's application, the program serves about 650 students at any one time or a total of about 1,300 a year. The majority of students are at Buechel and Kennedy,[3] with the balance distributed among six group homes. The district also previously worked with JCYS. A "checklist" in the district's application to the state is the only formal agreement with these facilities.

About 75 percent of students at both Buechel and Kennedy are male; 60 to 70 percent are African American. In contrast, only about one-third of the district's total enrollment are minorities. Both Buechel and Kennedy are Title I schools, with schoolwide programs. (All district Title I programs are schoolwide.)

The district identified these two schools and six group homes to receive program funding because they serve its most troubled youth. All district high schools and middle schools refer

[2]Buechel is a secured facility with metal detectors and security guards. Students wear "uniforms" (white shirt and khaki pants or skirts) and are not allowed to bring purses, coats with pockets, or backpacks into the school.

[3]Not all students at Buechel, however, are involved in the program.

students to Buechel and Kennedy. Although students at the group homes attend a variety of Jefferson County schools during the day, it is likely that they may attend either Buechel or Kennedy at some point.

All students at the group homes are eligible for tutoring, and all students at Kennedy can use the hardware and software purchased with Subpart 2 funds. At Buechel, Project Reality involves about 34 of the school's 300 students, with additional students included in field trips. Instructors identify candidates for the program during the first two weeks of the semester, selecting those who have severe behavioral problems or who indicate that they have been adjudicated delinquent. This semester, the OWE instructor and a second teacher who assists with the program decided to target their second period classes for the project because they contained large numbers of adjudicated youth.

Program Structure and Staffing

When students are referred to Buechel High or Kennedy Middle School (after a "due process" hearing at the district level), the alternative school's counselor obtains information about them during an intake meeting involving the student, his parents, and any other interested parties (e.g., social workers, parole officers, or staff from the sending school). If the student has been incarcerated within the state, the schools can obtain records of the grades and credits he received while institutionalized.

When a student is selected for Project Reality, Buechel administrators send a letter to his parents explaining that their child has been chosen for the program, and its purpose. The school also communicates with parents through a newsletter published twice a semester. According to administrators, the newsletter was an outgrowth of Project Reality, and always includes an article written by a participating student.

Kennedy's principal reported that his school maintained frequent contact with parents through regular telephone calls and materials sent home with students each week. He observed, however, that communicating with parents of students who are in alternative programs may require persistence. Many work at more than one job in order to support their families, and do not have positions that allow them to take time away from work for school meetings and

activities. To contact them, school personnel may have to call at specific times of day, at night, or on the weekend.

Buechel High School and Kennedy Middle School also coordinate with a variety of community agencies, including community centers, private hospitals, adolescent treatment centers, and mental health agencies. One Buechel instructor works closely with the carpenters' union apprenticeship program to place the school's pre-apprenticeship students. Field trips to the carpenters' union, as well as others (including electricians, operating engineers, and sheet metal workers) expose students to a variety of unions training programs.

At both schools, a contract among the student, parent, and school spells out the conditions under which a student can be considered for return to his home school.[4] The average length of stay at Buechel is about seven months, although students may stay for up to two years. At Kennedy, each sending middle school is allocated a certain number of "slots." Once it has filled those slots, it can refer additional students only by agreeing to "take back" others. Although Kennedy's principal makes the final decision, the two principals involved work together to determine which students will return. They make their selections based on the student's progress, rather than the length of time that he has been at Kennedy, as well as other factors (such as whether he needs to be separated from certain other students in the sending school). Twenty-five to 30 percent of students may remain at Kennedy for their whole middle school experience, although the school was not designed for this purpose.

Other sources of funding for services to delinquent students include:

- **State general funds**;
- **State funds for Extended School Services,** which provide instructional services outside of the regular school day;
- **Title I, Part A** (Buechel and Kennedy receive less than $100,000 each);
- **Perkins and School-to-Career funds**;
- **Small amounts of Safe and Drug-Free Schools funding** (most of which is used at the district level); and

[4]Students must have an 85 percent attendance record and no out-of-school suspensions, pass most of their classes, and have teacher approval.

- **Donations from businesses and employers.** The district expects all of its schools to involve businesses and employers. At Buechel, they have donated equipment for a school-based enterprise. At Kennedy, Meijer (a large retailer) sends department managers to the school to talk with students, allows them to visit the store to study the operations of particular departments, and donates items for treats and incentives. Home Depot (a building supply store) has provided materials for school projects (e.g., picnic tables that students will sell in order to raise funds for future projects).

The state's 1990 education reform legislation allocated $40 million in state funds to create Family Resource and Youth Service Centers, which also benefit this population.

The district's Title I specialists each estimated spending about 200 hours per year in activities related to administration of Subpart 2 (although Subpart 2 funds do not support their positions). Subpart 2 funds support one full-time instructor at Buechel and six part-time tutors at the group homes. When Kennedy opened three years ago, the local teacher's union agreed to allow administrators to hand-select teachers for the school, and only three of the original group have left. Buechel's principal helped design Project Reality shortly after he began work several years ago.

Like others in the district, these instructors participate in staff development opportunities offered by district personnel. Training in sound instructional strategies, Kennedy's principal suggested, is the most important preparation for teaching at-risk children. The majority would be better behaved if only they could do the assigned work, he said. Instructors must realize that many alternative students have adult responsibilities (e.g., caring for younger siblings, grocery shopping, cooking) at home, and treat them accordingly.

Instructors in both of the schools we visited had also received training in safety and security. When Kennedy Middle School opened three years ago, its principal explained, staff members were initially concerned about these issues, and focused staff training accordingly; training now addresses instructional issues. At Buechel High School, all personnel are trained in methods for safe physical restraint of students. As a result, the principal observed, students are often back in the classroom quickly after outbursts that would result in their being suspended from a regular school.

Program Services and Activities

Buechel's Project Reality is a student enrichment program that includes three components: (1) an "outdoor" component involving activities such as camping, rafting, and nature hikes; (2) a "work" component that involves community work experience; and (3) exposure to area businesses. This year, a volunteer from Junior Achievement, a not-for-profit organization created to familiarize youth with business and industry, is working with Project Reality students once a week. This individual is providing the "business" component of the project through Junior Achievement's Success 2000 program, which teaches employability skills. All students in the class complete career assessments, which staff use to decide what field trips they should plan.

All 34 students in Project Reality, as well as other students at Buechel with severe behavioral problems or a history of involvement with the juvenile justice system, participate in field trips. Field trip activities have included visits to:

- **"Henry's Ark,"** a sanctuary for abused or unwanted animals.
- **A veterinarian's office,** where students interested in animal-related careers were allowed to observe surgery.
- **"Camp Sky High,"** operated by the local police department, where pre-apprenticeship carpentry students were allowed to participate in ropes training and team-building exercises in exchange for work they did there.
- **An operating engineers' union,** where pre-apprenticeship students were allowed to operate heavy equipment under the supervision of a union instructor.
- **A "Habitat for Humanity" home,** where students helped with construction.

At Kennedy, the Title I reading specialist uses the SuccessMaker software paid for by Subpart 2 to assess students' reading and math levels, as well as their familiarity with technology. Students at both Kennedy and Buechel also use the software for instructional purposes. Kennedy's principal remarked that he would like to concentrate Subpart 2 funds on instructional technology, because students who are not technologically literate are "really out of step with society," he said. He would eventually like to have twice as many SuccessMaker workstations as the school currently has, so that each child could use one for about half an hour a

day. Such systems could also be used for individuals attending adult education or general equivalency diploma classes at the school. The school, however, was able to purchase only two integrated learning systems with the $8,000 it received. He also noted that he would allocate some funding for staff development, because there is little point in having instructional software unless all staff (including instructional assistants, who do not have extra time for training during their normal working day) know how to use it.

Instructional offerings at Kennedy High School and Buechel Middle School are identical to those in other Jefferson County Schools. The alternative high school offers a variety of vocational programs, including a school-based enterprise called Hydro-Herbs, in which students grow basil for sale to local restaurants; a pre-apprenticeship carpentry program; and a co-op program. Like all Jefferson County schools, it has an Options 2000 technology lab, which includes not only the latest computers but also robots, lasers, and electronic equipment. Administrators described this lab as being "second to none in the district." Related support services include sessions in anger management and career counseling.

Instructors often integrate academic and vocational instruction. For example, at the time of our visit, students in the school's pre-apprenticeship carpentry program were making "Beanie Baby bunkhouses," which will later go to the art class to be painted; students will describe their work on this project in papers they write for their portfolios. Instructors post their activities for the current week and plans for the coming week on a "Collaboration Board" in the faculty lounge, so that each one will know what is taking place in other classrooms.

Buechel's instructor noted that an additional service needed in the program was funding for substitute teachers to work with part of the Project Reality students while she took others on field trips. She also pointed out that, next year, the school would have to pay a fee of $5 each for career assessments (which it obtained for free this year).

Program Evaluation and Recommendations for Improvement

Buechel's principal reported that 18 percent of the students that his school returned to their "home" schools eventually came back to Buechel. It is difficult to determine how many students who attend Buechel complete high school, because — although they may complete their

graduation requirements at the alternative school — their diplomas are actually issued by their home schools.

State and district officials expect students served by Subpart 2 to meet the same academic standards that other students do,[5] and they take the same assessments. However, their scores on the Kentucky Instructional Results Information System (KIRIS) are reported along with others from their home school, and are not usually disaggregated.[6] In fact, the focus of KIRIS is on evaluating the performance of schools and districts, rather than individual students. As one administrator suggested, "their success is not based on their KIRIS scores," which are often low. Like other schools in the state, Jefferson County also administers the California Test of Basic Skills (CTBS) in grades 3, 6, and 9.

According to Buechel's principal, Project Reality has helped staff develop ideas about how to assist all students at the school in acquiring a strong work ethic and learning marketable skills: for example, the success of the project's work component led administrators to create the school's pre-apprenticeship carpentry program. Administrators noted, however, that they had encountered difficulty in collecting outcome information from students' home schools. Not only do students transfer to and from the alternative schools, but they also move into and out of detention facilities, and — often due to unstable home conditions — to other schools, districts, and states. (School administrators also tried unsuccessfully to obtain grant funds to support an employee to collect and track data.)

The district has not conducted any formal evaluations of its Subpart 2 program. In fact, administrators noted, it would be difficult or impossible to evaluate the effect of part-time tutoring services, due to the transient nature of the student population. Administrators suggested that the only meaningful evaluation might be a longitudinal study of whether children who attend Kennedy do, or do not, later end up at Buechel. Although this study could be accomplished with the district's existing student tracking system, it would be expensive and take funds away from student services.

District administrators indicated that — because of the flexibility that the program affords at the school level and the excellent guidance they had received from the state — they had little

[5]Kentucky's Learning Goals and Academic Expectations and Kentucky Core Content Standards.

[6]The state is using a new assessment system, the Commonwealth Accountability Test System (CATS) beginning in 1999.

difficulty in working with Subpart 2 funds. Our state-level contact observed that Subpart 2 funding does not necessarily directly "follow" the students who generate the funding, and that districts are in compliance with federal requirements as long as they are addressing the needs of at-risk children. His only suggestion for changes in the program was that districts might consider services for teen parents, in order to help them complete high school and transition to work.

Kalamazoo Public School District
Kalamazoo, Mich.

Program Overview

- Kalamazoo Public Schools used $119,671 in Subpart 2 funds to employ instructional staff and purchase computer hardware and software in four area facilities for delinquent youth.
- In school year 1998-99, approximately 460 students received program services; average daily attendance at the four facilities ranged from a low of nine to a high of 50.
- Subpart 2-funded educational coordinators at two halfway house programs tutor students in the evenings after they return from schools in the community.
- Impediments to more effective educational programs at some facilities included difficulty securing instructional staff and a lack of resources needed to upgrade computer hardware and software.

Kalamazoo is located in the southwestern corner of Michigan's lower peninsula. Three-fourths of the city's 83,00 residents are white; 19 percent are African American. The local economy is driven by auto-related manufacturing and pharmaceutical companies. Major area employers include Pharmacia & Upjohn, Inc., and Kellogg's Corporation, which is located in Battle Creek, 20 miles east of Kalamazoo. Median family income in Kalamazoo is roughly $29,000; the rate of unemployment is about 4 percent.

The Kalamazoo Public Schools (KPS) operates 25 schools (K-12), one adult education center, and five alternative and other schools that serve approximately 12,000 students. Fifty-two percent of the students are white and 40 percent are African American. Approximately 45 percent of the district's school-aged children live in poverty.

KPS is the largest of nine school districts served by the Kalamazoo Regional Educational Services Agency, which provides educational supports and regulatory monitoring for all schools within its jurisdiction. KPS used its $119,671 in Title I, Part D, Subpart 2 funds for the 1998-99 school year to (1) provide supplementary academic instruction for approximately 460 delinquent youths in four local facilities (two halfway houses, a county jail, and a juvenile home) and (2) purchase computers, software, and other instructional materials for these facilities.

This report describes the Subpart 2 program in the Kalamazoo school district. We visited the district in May 1999 after completing a telephone interview with the state's Title I

coordinator. While in Kalamazoo, we spoke with the district's Title I coordinator, instructors at the county jail and at a halfway house for adjudicated males, the program manager of a halfway house for females, and the administrator of the Juvenile Home School. We also reviewed a variety of documentation related to the district's programs, students, and services.

Program Goals and Design

The overall goal of KPS's Subpart 2 program is to improve delinquent students' academic achievement through supplementary instruction. The state's Title I director noted that state funding allows districts to operate dropout prevention programs in the regular public schools, and that funding provided by the Subpart 2 program is "just enough for the youngsters who are institutionalized." Therefore, the state allocates Subpart 2 funding to eligible districts on a formula basis to support direct instruction and purchase of computers and other instructional materials for delinquent youth.

Each of the four participating facilities in the district used their Subpart 2 funds to support their existing educational program, the goals of which vary. Two of the facilities (Academy Hall and Park Place) are halfway houses whose goals are to (1) improve students' practical living and social skills and (2) provide students with appropriate learning and employment experiences through a highly structured program. Residents of these facilities attend school in the community during the day and return to the facilities at night. The Juvenile Home's mission is to prepare students "to become competent, socially responsible, life-long learners," and the goals of the home's educational programs (a day program and a residential program) are to help students "catch-up" to their age-appropriate level and return to their home schools. The goal of the Kalamazoo County Law Enforcement (KCLE), a county jail program, is to assist incarcerated youth work toward completion of a general equivalency diploma, or to apply for and begin postsecondary education. Each facility used the bulk of its Subpart 2 funds to hire instructional staff who assist residents achieve these goals, as we describe more fully later in the report.

Students and Student Selection

The KPS Subpart 2 program served approximately 460 students last year. Table 1 summarizes the number of youth served at each facility on an annual, and on a daily, basis.

Table 1: Number of Students Served by Facility

Facility	Number Served Annually	Number Served Daily
Academy Hall	36	12
Park Place	42	9
Juvenile Home Intensive Learning Center (day program) Youth Center (residential program)	 92 242	 50 40
County Jail (KCLE)	73	14
Total	485	125

All residents of Academy Hall are males and all residents of Park Place are females; the other facilities serve students of both genders. Both Academy Hall and Park Place may serve up to 12 youths between the ages of 13-21 at any one time, although the majority of residents are between 15-18 years old. The two Juvenile Home programs serve youth 11-17 years old, while students in the county jail are between the ages of 17 and 21. A majority of students at each facility are minorities, and many require individual education plans.

Program Structure and Staffing

The district's Title I coordinator oversees all Subpart 2 activities. She said she spends one or two days each month administering the program, including managing the application process, reimbursing facilities, and writing reports for the state educational agency. In prior years she met with Subpart 2-funded staff each month to review progress and discuss any issues requiring attention. She now meets with facility staff less often owing to a recent loss of staff support, but reports that a minimum of two meetings each year and periodic telephone conversations keep her informed of program matters.

Subpart 2 staff at the facilities also consult with the district's content area specialists, as needed, and are invited to attend regional annual in-service training for Title I programs. Certified instructors may also take advantage of additional professional development

opportunities, such as district-sponsored conferences and in-service workshops. The Juvenile Home school offered 24 staff development opportunities for individual teachers and eight additional training sessions for the entire faculty. Topics addressed in these sessions included defiant children, behavior intervention strategies, and cultural diversity.

As noted, the majority of program funding supports instructional staff at participating facilities. We briefly describe below each of the four participating facilities, including staffing, the educational program, and the amount and uses of Subpart 2 funding.

- **Academy Hall** is a halfway house for adjudicated males, and **Park Place** is a halfway house for adjudicated females. Staff of each facility includes a program director, a house manager, five counselors, a psychologist, and an educational coordinator. Academy Hall also employs a job developer. Students residing at these facilities attend one of the district's alternative high schools, an adult education center, or a local community college. The Hall used $9,423 and Park Place used $8,481 in Subpart 2 funds to support part-time educational coordinators who provide students with tutorial assistance, and to purchase instructional materials.

- **Juvenile Home** operates the **Intensive Learning Center**, a day program for delinquent youth living at home or in foster care, and the **Youth Center**, a residential program. Staff include the coordinator, two counselors, two secretaries, 12 certified teachers, and 13 instructional aides. The educational programs at the Home include seven periods of classroom instruction. The home used $84,807 in Subpart 2 funds to cover the salaries of three aides ($67,000), purchase supplies ($13,000), and pay for staff travel to conferences ($1,000).

- **Kalamazoo County Law Enforcement** operates the county jail, which houses up to 350 inmates. The jail's educational program, which emphasizes general equivalency diploma preparation, used its $16,961 in Subpart 2 funds to pay the facility's lone instructor ($16,250) and to purchase instructional materials and supplies ($800).

The juvenile justice system assigns youth to the Juvenile Home or one of the two halfway houses after considering a youth's criminal history, family situation, and current service needs. If the court decides that a halfway house program (i.e., Academy Hall and Park Place) is appropriate, the court refers the case to the Family Independence Agency, a branch of the Michigan's Department of Human Services. The agency then contacts the program directors at the facilities and arranges for a tour of the premises during which a prospective resident meets with facility staff members. The youth, the agency caseworker, a probation officer, the program director, and parents (if allowed by the courts) then make a final decision.

At the time of adjudication and assignment to a detention facility, the court often establishes specific educational and behavioral goals the individual is expected to pursue while detained. Court-ordered goals are provided to facility administrators and become the basis for a contract between the resident and the facility. Goal attainment may constitute grounds for release from detention.

Program Services and Activities

On admission to Academy Hall or Park Place, residents are given an "orientation packet" that explains the rules and identifies available educational and other services. The two facilities are located in a residential neighborhood near the downtown area, within walking distance of two alternative high schools, and in close proximity to the Adult Education Center and the community college. Court-established goals, along with subsequent comments from the student, the program director, and other facility staff help determine the most appropriate course of study for individual residents. At Academy Hall, the educational instructor assists new residents review orientation materials, reviews the youths' files, and recommends a particular avenue for continuing their education to the program director.

In general, residents who hope to return to the regular schools attend one the district's alternative high schools, which provide nine-week courses that follow state curriculum requirements. Residents who elect to pursue a general equivalency diploma typically attend the district's adult education center, and students who have already obtained a general equivalency diploma often decide to enroll at a local community college or university. Residents not attending school work with the job development specialist to learn about seeking, securing, and maintaining employment.

The educational coordinators at the two halfway house facilities typically arrive for work in the afternoon when residents are returning from school. In addition to providing tutorial assistance as needed and helping students complete their homework, these individuals may also take the students to and from the local library, conduct Internet searches (students are not allowed access to the Internet), and otherwise support students. For example, the coordinator at Academy Hall served as a chaperon at a school dance so the students could participate in "normal" school activities (prom night, for example).

The Juvenile Home School operates an Intensive Learning Center program for adjudicated youth who continue to live at home or in foster homes (Youth are bused to the site by the school system, or walk, if in the immediate neighborhood) and a Youth Center program for full-time residents. According to the school's administrator, "although the majority of the youth have average intellect," most are functioning below grade level. About one-fourth of the students require special education, including 11 percent who have some type of learning disability.

For students in both programs, the school day begins with breakfast at 7:30 a.m., followed by seven periods of classroom instruction. Subjects include science, social studies, mathematics, English and reading, art, gym, technology education, home economics, positive decision-making, and computers. An optional class for youth aged 16 and older is "workshop," where they learn employability skills (teamwork, following directions, dependability) and prepare to enter the workforce. For example, youth assemble "packets" of materials for a local craft company (i.e., the screws, nuts, and bolts for a birdhouse kit), work for which they are paid.

In addition to classroom instruction, learning center students produce a school newspaper and a book of poetry. The school also fields a boys' basketball team, invites a number of local celebrities (including the mayor) to a Career Day program, and holds numerous school "assemblies" (concerts, plays, dances). In their art class, students created stained-glass pieces that they exhibited at regional craft shows and for which some students received awards. A class field trip to view the competition is part of the learning experience. The coordinator writes numerous grants to secure additional resources needed to enhance the facility's fine arts and academic curriculum.

The educational program at the county jail focuses on general equivalency diploma preparation, an activity in which residents participate at the expense of their recreational time. The Subpart 2-funded instructor at the jail meets with an average of five female residents in the morning and with an average of six male residents in the afternoon, although the number of students changes daily. Typically, inmates attend classes four days a week, for two-to-three hours each day. The instructor, cognizant of the sacrifice students are making to further their education, strives to tailor the program as much as possible.

The instructor at the jail is constantly seeking donations for books, magazines, and computer equipment and software to supplement the scarce resources currently at her disposal.

Her typical day begins by picking up a roster of inmates, identifying residents in the 17-21 age range, and presenting the list to the sergeant on duty who takes a week or two to approve or disapprove her selection based on behavior and severity of crime committed. As part of her routine, she goes to the cell block and "announces" that classes are in session. If a student misses class three times, the instructor removes him or her from the roster and gives the "slot" to another individual.

While most of her students are working toward a general equivalency diploma (21 students completed these in school year 1998-99), many plan to continue with postsecondary education (19 students in 1998-99), and she helps these students complete financial aid forms for Kalamazoo Valley Community College, as needed. She has also worked with a few students who required Adult Basic Education, but reported that the materials she has on hand are geared for general equivalency diploma study.

Program Evaluation and Recommendations for Improvement

Consistent with federal guidelines, the district requires facility programs to report basic demographic information on students served and encourages the collection of additional information on student outcomes. Although the number of students who complete general equivalency diploma requirements or enroll in alternative high schools, is generally available at the facility level, complete information on student outcomes, such as gains on test scores, is frequently difficult to obtain, due to student mobility. As one example, the instructor at the county jail noted that of the 50 students with whom she worked at some point during this year, 26 left jail or were barred from returning to class before making any measurable progress. An additional factor in the halfway house environment is the possibility of students simply not showing up for school; during our visit, one girl had been absent without permission for three days.

Asked for recommended improvements to the program, all of those with whom we spoke believed the Subpart 2 program provides a much-needed service, and many agreed that these funds provide perhaps the only "real" education their students have ever experienced. One program director noted that it was getting increasingly difficult to find persons who would work part-time at the rate of pay that was being offered--especially if a certified teacher (or someone

with a B.A. degree) were to be considered for the position of tutor-educational coordinator.[1] While employing college-aged students is one option, because Western Michigan University is in Kalamazoo, the director noted that these students would likely stay with the program for only one or two years in order to pursue full-time employment after graduation.

Most of the facility staff with whom we spoke also noted a need for additional funding to upgrade existing computers (or to add more state-of-the-art hardware) and to purchase new software. New equipment and software, in turn, often necessitate additional staff training. The instructor in the county jail program believes that any additional funding should be used to hire a basic skills instructor to work with residents with low skill levels on general equivalency diploma preparation and to serve residents aged 21 and older. This instructor said she felt less valued, because the person who administers general equivalency diploma exams, is paid by the jail rather than KPS, and receives twice her current hourly wage.

[1]The educational coordinator at Park Place had only recently been hired at the time of our visit, and the program had not employed a steady tutor for more than a year.

Duluth Public Schools
Duluth, Minn

Program Overview

- Duluth Public Schools received $100,000 in Subpart 2 funds for the 1998-99 school year through a competitive grant process, and used $73,000 to support three full-time staff who provide transition and follow-up services to delinquent youth in residential treatment programs.
- In school year 1998-99, 313 students received program services, including pre and posttesting and instruction through Plato 2000, an educational software program aligned with Minnesota Basic Standards.
- Program staff monitor students weekly during the first month after release and monthly thereafter for a year; maintain contact with school staff, probation officers, social workers, and parents; and make quarterly visits to students at their home schools.
- Between September 1995 and June 1998, 512 students transitioned back to their home schools, 71 percent of whom either enrolled in school, graduated, or worked toward a general equivalency diploma.
- District staff recommend maintenance of targeted Title I funds for neglected and delinquent youth, additional funds to provide transition services for neglected students, and more staff to monitor students.

In the northeast corner of Minnesota on Lake Superior, Duluth has been a major shipping port since the 1800s. Installation of an aerial lift bridge in the early 1900s spurred growth in the shipping industry, the city's primary source of revenue until 20 years ago when income from tourism increased. Duluth's economy is also supported by several regional health facilities. The vast majority of the city's 85,500 residents are of Scandinavian descent with small percentages of African American and Native Americans and even fewer Asian Americans and Hispanics.

The Duluth Public Schools (DPS) Independent School District includes 14 elementary, four middle, and three high schools. The district also operates nine alternative educational programs, including one for teen parents, a junior and senior high school for students with behavioral problems, two residential programs for delinquent youth, three residential programs for neglected youth, and an area learning center. The district serves approximately 13,000 students (89 percent white, 5 percent Native American, 3 percent African American, 2 percent Asia and Pacific Islander, and 1 percent Hispanic). Approximately 20 percent of school-aged children in the district live in families with incomes below the poverty level.

In school year 1998-99, the Duluth Public Schools received $100,000 in Subpart 2 funds from the state through a competitive grant process,[1] and used approximately $73,000 to pay the salaries and benefits of a full-time project coordinator and two full-time educational assistants. These staff persons provide academic and transition services to students in five programs located in three participating facilities: (1) Woodland Hills residential treatment facility, which operates a long-term residential program and also houses an intensive day treatment program and a short-term residential treatment program, known as Chisholm House; (2) Arrowhead Juvenile Center, and (3) Bethany Crisis Shelter.[2] The district used $14,000 to purchase computers and software for the three facilities, and nearly $10,000 paid for the project coordinator's travel to monitor participating students (in and out of district and occasionally out of state).

This report presents the results of our visit to the Duluth Public Schools in May 1999 to obtain descriptive information on district activities under the Title I, Part D, Subpart 2 program. We collected data about the program through a structured telephone interview with the state education agency (SEA) Title I neglected or delinquent coordinator, a two-day site visit to the Duluth Public Schools and the two residential facilities, and review of program documentation (e.g., application for Subpart 2 funds, cooperative agreements with the participating facilities, monitoring forms and data, and program evaluation reports). Individuals we interviewed in Duluth included the district's Title I coordinator, the principal of the district's residential treatment programs, the Subpart 2 project coordinator, one of the full-time educational assistants, and the superintendent, principal, and teachers at one of the residential facilities.

Program Goals and Design

The primary goal of the DPS Subpart 2 program is to provide delinquent students in three facilities with transition and monitoring (follow-up) services. Another program purpose is to improve detained students' academic achievement through the use of educational software that supports the state's curriculum. These combined efforts help prepare students for a successful return to their home schools. The students at the Woodland Hills Residential Treatment Facility

[1]Of the 367 districts in Minnesota, 21 applied for a portion of the state's $875,000 funds for 1998-99. Fifteen districts received grants; a majority of grantees had previously received awards.

[2]Unless otherwise noted, all references to Woodland Hills includes all three programs at this facility.

and at the Arrowhead Juvenile Center most move back to their home school; students at the Bethany Crisis Shelter either return to their home school or to an alternative placement (often Woodland Hills or the Arrowhead Juvenile Center).

Minnesota does not prescribe any specific statewide strategy for local Subpart 2 programs, preferring instead to allow each district to decide how best to use the funding to address local needs, within the parameters established by federal guidelines.[3] When Subpart 2 funding first became available, the principal of the Duluth Public School's treatment programs[4] had several conversations with the state to understand the intent of the funding and transition programs appeared to be a priority. District employees decided that transition and monitoring efforts would focus on delinquent students in residential treatment settings. During the first two years of grant funding (1995-1997), only Woodland Hills residential students and intensive day treatment students participated in the Subpart 2 program. At the suggestion of the state, Arrowhead Juvenile Center students were added in year three of program funding when that facility opened a new residential treatment program. The state also recommended that the district include delinquent students from the shelter, a short-term placement facility.

A second goal of the Subpart 2 program is to assist students to improve academically through the use of educational software. Students at all three participating facilities are pretested in reading, language arts, and mathematics with Plato 2000 software to determine their academic needs. This software is integrated with the classroom teacher's curriculum so students continue to use Plato 2000 during their treatment stays. Arrowhead Juvenile Center and Woodland Hills students are posttested before exiting a facility to determine their grade gains. Due to the short-term nature of their stay (i.e., less than a week), students at Bethany Crisis Shelter are typically pretested there and posttested, when possible, at Woodland Hills or Arrowhead Juvenile Center.

Prior to the most recent reauthorization of the Title I (Improving America's Schools Act) in 1994, Bethany Crisis Shelter students did not have access to academic software; Arrowhead Juvenile Center students received instruction on self-esteem from the academic teachers to help them upon release; and the Woodland Hills students used academic software only during their

[3]No district is required to operate a dropout prevention program as no local facility has 70 percent of its students returning to school within district boundaries.

[4]For the purpose of this Subpart 2 program, the principal of the DPS treatment programs functions in a role similar to a district Title I coordinator.

library period. Moreover, the Duluth district did not provide post-release tracking or follow-up services for these students. Thus, the district took advantage of the flexibility afforded by the 1994 reauthorization and designed their Subpart 2 program to fill existing gaps in the continuum of services available to delinquent youth.

Students and Student Selection

At the time of our visit, the Subpart 2 program had served a total of 313 students during the 1998-99 school year. Approximately 62 percent of these students were white, while another 23 percent (including 59 of Arrowhead Juvenile Center's 168 students) were Native Americans. Table 1 identifies, by facility, the number and age range of students who were pretested on Plato 2000, a program service all students at Arrowhead Juvenile Center and Woodland Hills receive and 70 percent of Bethany Crisis Shelter students receive. Students not pretested typically bring school work with them to complete and do not use the Plato system during their brief stay.

Table 1: Number of Students Served, by Facility, in School Year 1998-99

Facility	Total Number of Students Served	Age Range
Woodland Hills	137 (95 males, 42 females)	10-18 years
Long-term residential program	70	
Intensive day treatment program	48	
Short-term residential program	19	
Arrowhead Juvenile Center	168 (123 males, 45 females)	10-18 years
Bethany Crisis Shelter	8 (4 males, 4 females)	13-15 years

Student characteristics and length of stays vary by type of facility. Bethany Crisis Shelter students stay an average of five to seven days at the facility. Most students are placed in the shelter by county probation officers or social service agency staff members. Three of the 15 beds are reserved for self-referrals. Shelter students often have a family history of behavioral or emotional problems.

The majority of all Woodland Hills students have individual education plans and most Woodland Hills treatment students reside at the facility for seven to nine months. Chisholm House students average a 14-21 day stay at a residential facility downtown, and intensive day

treatment students remain in the program for an average of four months. Arrowhead Juvenile Center, a maximum-security facility, houses students who are felons for an average of 90 days. At least one-third of the students at Arrowhead Juvenile Center have individual education plans and 5 percent return to the facility up to 12 times.

A typical student from the Arrowhead Juvenile Center or Woodland Hills is approximately two years behind academically. In addition, 95 percent of students have behavioral issues ranging from truancy to violent crimes; 55 percent have run away from home or are homeless; 50 percent of male students were involved in some form of assaultive behavior; 33 percent of students come from single parent families; 30 percent are from low-income families; 20 percent are from families living in poverty; and 10 percent are from upper income families.

Program Structure and Staffing

The principal of the district's residential treatment programs oversees all Subpart 2 activities. However, he reports not having to spend much time on program matters, owing to the effort, energy, and competence of the project coordinator. The full-time Subpart 2 project coordinator is responsible for daily program operations, coordinating both the Plato 2000 activities and all transition and monitoring activities, and writing quarterly and annual reports. He is assisted by two full-time educational assistants. One assistant works full-time at Woodland Hills, where she is responsible for the computer lab and library and the pre and post testing of students on Plato 2000. Another assistant has similar responsibilities but serves half-time at Woodland Hills and half-time at Arrowhead Juvenile Center. Both assistants help the project coordinator with transition activities.

We briefly describe below each participating Subpart 2 facility, identifying the hardware and software purchased with program funds during the first three years of the grant. We discuss student tracking, part of the transition and monitoring efforts, and the use of the Plato 2000 software at all three locations in greater detail in the next section of this report (Program Services and Activities).

- **Woodland Hills Residential Treatment Facility** is a nationally known, nonprofit, nonsecure facility for adolescents between the ages of 13-17 with behavioral or

delinquency problems. The facility houses 70 students arranged in five groups, four groups of boys by grade levels and one group of girls. Students are generally adjudicated there and stay about seven to nine months. Five Duluth Public School teachers (all special education certified) provide daily instruction[5] from 8:30 a.m. to 3:15 p.m. in English, mathematics, science, social studies, health and physical education, and vocational education. (DPS pays for the equipment in the vocational classroom.) There are 12 students per class, accompanied by a facility staff person.

Students in the **Intensive Day Treatment Program** and **Chisholm House** are brought to Woodland Hills for their daily education program. Four classroom teachers provide instruction to 12 students per class. Students take classes from all four teachers.

From 1996 to 1998, the facility used Subpart 2 funds to purchase 11 computers, four printers, and various educational software (i.e., Plato 2000, Microsoft Encarta Encyclopedia, Print Shop Deluxe, Math & Spelling Blaster, Learning to Type, Minnesota Career Information System, and Ojibwe Language). Students use computers in the school's library at least twice a week for one hour each visit.

- **Arrowhead Juvenile Center**, a county-operated detention center established in 1972, first received program funding in 1997, after adding 28 residents and expanding its treatment program. Students attend five classes per day: English, social studies, mathematics, science, and transition. All five teachers are special education certified. A facility staff person stays with the students during each class. Subpart 2 funding supported the establishment of the transition class in which students work with staff on transition issues, use the computer for academic support, or receive vocational education services from a district specialist. The Arrowhead Juvenile Center computer lab has five computers, two printers, and one scanner, and education software, all purchased with Subpart 2 funds.

- **Bethany Crisis Shelter** is a nonprofit facility operated by Lutheran Social Services. The shelter provides short-term housing (five to seven-day stays) for a maximum of 15 runaways and other qualifying juveniles. Youths at the shelter are often court adjudicated to Woodland Hills or Arrowhead Juvenile Center. District staff provide educational instruction to students. Since the Fall of 1996, Subpart 2 funds purchased two computers, two printers, and accompanying software. A DPS teacher provides students with computer-assisted instruction on a half-time basis.

Use of Subpart 2 funds at the three participating facilities is guided by the terms of the Subpart 2 application, which also serves as the formal written agreement between the facilities and the district. The district is the fiscal agent for Subpart 2 funds, and representatives from each facility sign a separate page of the application acknowledging their agreement regarding grant

[5]The curriculum at Woodland Hills and Arrowhead Juvenile Center is the same one used in regular DPS schools.

funds. The agreement outlines the services that will be offered to students and identifies key contact persons by name and phone number.

Students at these facilities receive a multitude of services from collaborating agencies. Although the county operates the juvenile detention center (Arrowhead), DPS uses local funds to pay for the student's academic program; the same is true at Woodland Hills and the Bethany Crisis Shelter. Local organizations providing staff time and services to all three participating Subpart 2 facilities include social services, the county health department, drug and violence prevention program, the YWCA, Duluth Technical College, homeless advocates, the Boy's and Girl's Club, a neighborhood recreation club, the Women's Coalition, a sexual assault center, a mental health agency, and the county probation department. Moreover, the project coordinator has established a working relationship with nearly all of the students' probation officers. A local doctor provides free tatoo removal for interested Woodland Hills students, many of whom are former gang members.

Parental involvement in these students' education and treatment varies widely. Arrowhead Juvenile Center students are allowed weekly visits from their parents, but at least half of these families do not live in the Duluth area. Some parents attend individual education plan meetings or participate in family therapy. According to staff at Woodland Hills and the Arrowhead Juvenile Center, by the time students enter a facility, their parents' patience has typically run out, and they are often relieved to transfer responsibility for their children to the facility. Once a student is released from a participating facility and is receiving Subpart 2 monitoring services, the project coordinator attempts to contact parents on a weekly basis during the first month after release, then monthly for the remainder of the year.

Program Services and Activities

As noted, nearly three-fourths of the district's Subpart 2 funds support three full-time staff members who (1) conduct computer-based academic pre- and posttesting of students using Plato 2000, and (2) provide transition and follow-up services to students released from the participating facilities. Table 2 displays the number of students, by facility, who received pre- and posttesting on Plato 2000, and the number of released students who received transition

Table 2: Students Receiving Subpart 2 Services, in School Year 1998-99

Facility	Number Pretested	Number Posttested	Number Released
Woodland Hills (all 3 programs)	137	86	111
Arrowhead Juvenile Center	168	51	67
TOTALS	295	137	178

services at the two residential treatment facilities.[6] Nearly all released students receive monitoring services except for the few students who either obtain a general equivalency diploma while at a facility or enter community college upon release.

Within the first few weeks of a student's admission to a participating facility, Subpart 2 staff use Plato 2000 to pretest a student in language arts, mathematics, and reading. Plato 2000 is a modular, self-paced curriculum with a variety of assessments that allows students and teachers to monitor a student's progress and identify problem areas.[7] Plato 2000 is aligned with the Metropolitan Achievement Test, a nationally normed standardized assessment given to district students each April. Local Subpart 2 staff members and the state's coordinator for neglected or delinquent youths are advocating that state establish an Internet-based testing program for students in alternative placements regarding the state basic standards tests. Although most of these students are required to participate in the state's achievement testing program, it is often difficult for facility staff to comply with the rigid testing arrangements; an Internet-based testing program would allow more alternative students to participate in the state's testing program.

Based on a student's pretest scores, the software suggests a personal educational plan that staff revise as needed. Students work on the Plato curriculum in conjunction with their regular classroom course work. Plato is also aligned with the state's basic graduation standards initiative. Before students are released from the Arrowhead Juvenile Center or Woodland Hills, they are tested on Plato 2000 to determine their grade-level gains.[8] According to the SEA,

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[6]The table includes students served through April 1999 and does not include students at the Bethany Crisis Shelter, eight of whom received a pretest, because posttesting and traditional transition services often occur after these students enter another facility.

[7]Duluth's alternative junior and senior high schools used Plato 2000 prior to the Subpart 2 grant.

[8]The majority of released students are posttested. Facility staff do not always notify Subpart 2 staff when a student is

because the large majority of delinquent students reside outside of Duluth, the support from Subpart 2 funds for program elements like technology, is vital.

In addition to the DPS curriculum taught in the classrooms at each participating facility, students at all three sites receive additional services to address their social, emotional, and physical needs.

- Woodland Hills residential students participate in the facility's Positive Peer Culture Treatment Model, which has been in use since 1972. Students are interviewed upon admission and assigned to one of five peer groups. All groups receive instruction in peer resolution techniques and violence prevention. Students stay with their assigned group throughout the day for academics, recreation, and group counseling sessions that focus on problem solving and interpersonal skills. Biweekly family counseling sessions are also conducted.

- Bethany Crisis Shelter students receive assistance with social and independent living skills through their supervised daily living routine. They have access to recreational activities, individual counseling, discussion groups, and transportation to and from appointments during their stays. Homebound instruction is available for students not from Duluth or who are confined to the shelter.

- Arrowhead Juvenile Center treatment students participate in a 60-hour curriculum, Cognitive Skills, that focuses on behavioral alternatives, decision making, and problem solving. The overall treatment program stresses restorative justice through victim-offender reconciliation. Students also participate in anger management training, an independent living skills program, active parenting (as appropriate), substance abuse treatment, and for females, expanded life choices. Nearly a third of the center's students are Native Americans, and these students have regular access to an Indian Youth Advocate who assists students and teachers with cultural issues.

Transition services for students at Woodland Hills or the Arrowhead Juvenile Center begin in the last six weeks of a student's stay at a facility and continue for one year after release.[9] In the six weeks prior to release, the district's due process coordinator (located at Woodland Hills) compiles a comprehensive academic record for the student and forwards this report to a student's home school. Subpart 2 staff members then schedule an initial transition meeting at the student's home school, attended by the student, the Subpart 2 project coordinator, the school's

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scheduled for release. Subpart 2 staff receive advance release notification anywhere from one hour to a few weeks.

[9]Due to the short stays of students at the Bethany Crisis Shelter, transition for these students differs; program staff assist center staff to prepare a student to return to their home school or to a residential treatment facility.

social worker, school counselor, assistant principal, facility classroom teacher, facility treatment staff person, and the student's parent or guardian. The project coordinator and social worker ask the student questions about the skills he or she learned in treatment and how he or she will apply these skills in problem situations at the home school. The facility teacher reports on the student's academic progress during his or her treatment stay, and the counselor, with assistance from the other meeting attendees, arranges the student's school schedule. Also during the initial transition meeting, parents are asked to sign a release form allowing the Subpart 2 project coordinator to obtain follow-up information about their child from school records, school staff, probation officers, and directly from the student. Students who will stay in the Duluth area upon release from a facility (about 18 percent of residents) may attend their home school four hours a day during the six-week pre-release transition period and then return to the facility.

During the first six-weeks following a student's release, the project coordinator communicates on a weekly basis with the student, assistant principal, counselor, social worker, and all of the student's teachers to obtain information on the student's attendance, academic progress, and behavior. After the six-week post-release transition period, the project coordinator maintains monthly contact with a released student for one year. Most of these contacts are by telephone; on a quarterly basis, the project coordinator travels throughout the state to make in-person visits with a student at their home school. The project coordinator contacts a student's home school one month prior to an on-site visit to arrange meetings with the student, an administrator, the counselor or special education case manager, teachers, and to review a student's report card. He also tries to schedule a visit to the student's home.

Subpart 2 staff began providing these follow-up services to Woodland Hills treatment students in 1996; Arrowhead Juvenile Center students first received this service in April 1998. Most released students receive follow-up services; those that do not include students who receive a general equivalency diploma during their residential stays, students who will attend a community college, or Woodland Hills students who are administratively discharged due to court order, parental consent, or because a student is not adhering to the treatment program. The project coordinator provides these monitoring services to approximately 235 students each year, and maintains an Access data base that documents the educational and employment status of each student.

Program Evaluation and Recommendations for Improvement

The Duluth Public School's Subpart 2 program is currently in its fourth year of operation, and staff from the project, facilities, the district, and the state educational agency believe the project is successful. Many of the individuals we interviewed credit the project coordinator's dedication to the students as an important factor. "If the project coordinator was not there for the students, they would drop out (after release) and most people wouldn't know." Staff from students' home schools have also noted that this is the only program they know of where someone monitors returning students at their home schools, stating that students enjoy the follow-up, knowing someone "really cares and is looking out for them." Moreover, home school staff have an opportunity to view formerly delinquent students in a positive manner.

The project's success is substantiated by data the Subpart 2 staff collect to measure the attainment of three central project objectives:

- Seventy percent of students will progress academically above their current level in math, language arts, and reading.
- Ninety-five percent of Duluth-area delinquent students will move into appropriate school settings on a part-time basis at least six weeks prior to release from a treatment program.
- A minimum of 70 percent of students who move into a school program will remain in that program for one year and receive monthly monitoring assistance.

To evaluate progress on these objectives, staff collect for each student data on daily classroom work while in treatment, pre and posttest Plato 2000 scores, attendance, behavior reports, grades at the home school, and anecdotal comments from students, parents, case manager, school administrators and staff.

In the Fall of 1998, all 15 Minnesota Subpart 2 grantees completed a three-year evaluation of their activities.[10] The state educational agency submitted this report to the U.S. Department of Education in January 1999. According to the Duluth evaluation, between September 1995 and June 1998, a total of 512 students returned to their home schools, of whom

[10]Twelve of the grantees had received funding for three years, three had received funds for two years, and one grantee was funded for a single year.

365 (71 percent) were either enrolled in school, graduated, or working toward a general equivalency diploma. A total of 674 students used the Plato 2000 education system. In 1996-97, 75 percent of Woodland Hills ninth graders passed the state basic standards test in reading and 43 percent passed the math portion of the test. In 1997-98, 72 percent of tenth grade Woodland Hills students passed the reading portion of the basic standards test and 63 percent passed the math portion.

When asked to identify impediments to a more successful program, the project coordinator and the principal of the residential programs both agreed that more people, at all levels, are needed to assist students (i.e., probation officers, social workers, staff members at a students' home school). One employee said, "We are always working on better communication among the staff members." Overall, staff members believe the program is working well and had a hard time finding any faults. They were highly complimentary of Minnesota's Title I coordinator and the assistance he is always willing to provide. "He is very conscientious and student-centered," one staff member said. The district's Title I coordinator also remarked that the state coordinator "is an excellent resource for us."

Recommendations for improving the Subpart 2 program focused on transition and follow-up and funding issues. The district's Title I coordinator suggests maintaining the requirement that a portion of Title I funds be earmarked for neglected and delinquent youth. "Too often non-targeted money goes into the general fund," she said. She hopes the program will not become part of a block grant. The principal of the residential programs stated that additional funds could be used to provide transition services for neglected students and to hire additional staff to monitor students. The state Title I neglected or delinquent coordinator made several suggestions: (1) encourage more collaboration between Title I and federal juvenile justice programs (i.e. congruent program goals), (2) strengthen the statute's definition of transition because this activity is critical for student's success, (3) add funding for monitoring and follow-up services for more students, and (4) clarify and strengthen the statute's definition of follow-up services.

Lincoln Public School District
Lincoln, Neb.

Program Overview

- Lincoln Public Schools (LPS), one of only two districts in Nebraska that participates in the Title I, Part D, Subpart 2 program, received $40,425 in Subpart 2 funds for the 1998-99 school year and allocated the total amount to the only county-operated detention center in the district, which used most of the funds to staff a life skills program.
- In school year 1997-98, 386 youths participated in the center's educational program, with average daily attendance ranging from 45 to 62 students. Students attended classes five hours per day.
- The Subpart 2 funded life skills program emphasizes the development of communication, problem-solving, emotional management, and other basic skills, along with goal-setting, and resource identification.
- A cooperative agreement between the district and the center requires facility teachers to maintain working relationships with youths' home schools to ensure the comparability of the education program. Although a teacher tracks students' initial placement after release, no comprehensive transition program is in place.
- District staff members recommend (1) greater state and federal involvement in development of a model transition program, (2) changing funding formulas to include counts of all delinquent children, and (3) increased national collaboration and training opportunities for program administrators.

Lincoln is the capital of and second largest city in Nebraska (after Omaha), with a population of approximately 209,000. Government is the city's biggest employer, with city, county, state, and federal offices located there. Major private industries include printing, publishing and insurance. The median household income is $51,900; the unemployment rate is consistently between 2 and 3 percent.

The Lincoln Public School (LPS) district operates a total of 51 schools: 36 elementary, 10 middle, and five high schools. The district serves approximately 31,000 students in grades pre-kindergarten - 12 (87 percent white, 5 percent African American, 4 percent Asian American, 3 percent Hispanic, and 1 percent Native American). Lincoln is a refugee resettlement community, with 1,000 of the district's students enrolled in an English as a Second Language (ESL) program, representing more than 30 different languages. Twenty-six percent of district students participate in the free and reduced-price lunch program.

In school year 1998-99, the Nebraska Department of Education (NDE) distributed $175,348 in Title I, Part D, Subpart 2 funds, on a formula basis, to two eligible school districts:

Omaha public schools and LPS. Eligibility for Subpart 2 funds in prior years required districts to house at least 15 percent of Nebraska's total delinquent student population residing in local correctional facilities during the previous year's October caseload count. Nebraska's Title I, Part D Committee of Practitioners established this criterion to ensure that Subpart 2 funds supported districts with high percentages of delinquent youth, as required by federal law. However, after the district lost Subpart 2 funding in 1996-97 because the district's population of delinquent youth fell below the 15 percent level, the Committee of Practitioners voted to lower the eligibility criterion to 10 percent to ensure that the district received funding each year.

With the exception of 1996-97, LPS has received a Subpart 2 grant every year since they became available. For 1998-99, the district received $40,425 in program funds and allocated the total amount, as it does every year, to the educational program at the Lancaster County Attention Center, the only county-operated, juvenile detention center in the district.[1] The center used its money to fund a new, full-time program specialist position with a focus on basic academic and life skills ($28,812) and to purchase instructional materials and office supplies ($11,613).

This report provides a detailed description of the district's activities under the Title I, Part D, Subpart 2 program. We collected information about the program from three sources: (1) a telephone interview with the Nebraska Title I administrator, (2) a two-day site visit to the Lincoln district in April 1999, and (3) a review of program documentation, including the district's application for Subpart 2 funds, state and local Subpart 2 program evaluation reports, and the formal agreement between the district and the Lancaster County Attention Center. During our visit to LPS, we interviewed the district's federal programs director and administrative assistant, as well as the Title I evaluator. We also visited one of the Attention Center's two campuses in Lincoln, and spoke with the director of education, two academic teachers, and the Subpart 2 funded program specialist.

[1]Despite the fact that more than 90 percent of youth at the center are district residents, the district does not use any program funds for at-risk students in any of LPS's regular schools. According to the administrative assistant for federal programs, the district has traditionally decided against retaining a portion of the money to operate or support a drop-out prevention program because of the relatively minimal funding amount and the greater need of the Attention Center.

Program Goals and Design

The goals and design of Subpart 2 programs in Nebraska are largely the responsibility of local districts and facilities. The Nebraska Department of Education (NDE) strongly supports the practice of site-based management and therefore does not impose requirements beyond those set forth in federal law.[2] While there is no statewide strategy for the design of Subpart 2 programs specifically, the state has been instrumental in establishing general recommendations for the development and operation of educational programs for neglected and delinquent youth in Nebraska. For instance, in response to the 1994 reauthorization's focus on the transition of neglected and delinquent youth, the NDE initiated a longitudinal study of current transition procedures and outcomes. While the state never completed the study, due to limited funding, it became the impetus for the development, in 1997, of a multi-agency task force,[3] led by a state senator and the Title I, Part D state administrator, "to develop recommendations for policies, practices, and procedures for the education of children and youth who are wards of the court or the state." In January 1999, the task force produced a report presenting a model protocol for transition, which they disseminated across the state.[4]

More recently, the task force has explored the plausibility of using the Portable Assisted Study Sequence (PASS) program for the education of neglected and delinquent youth. California originally developed the PASS program as a semi-independent study program for middle and high school migrant students, who, because of their movement from school to school, needed an opportunity to earn course credits toward high school graduation that would be accepted by schools throughout the state. At least 30 other states have adopted the PASS program, including Nebraska, and its use is expanding beyond migrant students to other students in temporary placements. In fact, the Omaha district has begun to use their Subpart 2 allocation to support the PASS program.

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[2] NDE has established a Title I, Part D Committee of Practitioners, which meets periodically to review changes in the federal law and approve any guidance for state and local agencies regarding programs supported by Title I, Part D.

[3] The task force is supported, in part, by funds from Title I, Part D, and is chartered by six state agencies: (1) Health and Human Services; (2) Department of Education; (3) Crime Commission; (4) Department of Corrections; (5) Probation; and (6) Voices for Children.

[4] The LPS administrative assistant for federal programs was not aware of this report.

Historically, the education director of the Lancaster County Attention Center determines the goals and design of the educational program, with consultation from the district office. Currently, the two main goals of the center's educational program are to (1) improve the educational achievement of the students and (2) develop and implement a transition program to assist residents to develop "life skills" that will enhance their potential for success in the regular school environment, the community, and employment. The center uses its Subpart 2 funds to support both goals, the first through the purchase of instructional materials, and the second through paying the salary for a full-time life skills program specialist..

The educational program director based his decision to use Subpart 2 funds to support these two goals on a belief that programs rooted in basic academic skills and career and life skills are most effective with this student population: "The kids we serve here are those who have not been successful in school. They come in at all different [academic] levels and they are typically two to three grade levels behind their peers." Therefore, an individual, self-paced instructional program emphasizing basic skills in English, math and social studies seemed appropriate.

Last year, the education director used Subpart 2 funds to purchase 10 computers and computer software. In his experience, traditional instructional strategies and pencil and paper materials alone do not work well with his students. He believes that educational programs for delinquent youth should incorporate computer technology and software, in conjunction with more traditional materials, in order to address different learning styles, maintain youth's motivation and interest, and keep pace with future trends in education. In addition, Internet access provides youth with the opportunity to enroll in college correspondence courses if they complete their high school credits while detained.

Students and Student Selection

The Attention Center serves residents of Lancaster County who are under 18 years of age and (1) temporarily detained while awaiting adjudication, or (2) adjudicated and ordered by the court to serve a specified period of time. The center has two campuses located within district boundaries; one campus is more secure and houses more serious offenders, and the other houses less serious offenders. The education program is designed to serve all youth in residence at the two center campuses.

The center admits more than 1,000 youths each year. However, this total counts twice youth who were admitted more than once within a year. Moreover, approximately 20 percent of juveniles admitted are released within the first 24 hours. Therefore, the number of individual students served by the educational program is considerably smaller than the number of admissions. Last year, 386 youths participated in the educational program. Currently, the average daily student population ranges from 45 to 62 students. The age of the students ranges from 12 to 18 years, with an average age of 15.5 years. Approximately 70 percent of the center's residents are males. In comparison to the district's overall student population, students at the Attention Center are more likely to be minority males, from low-income families, and eligible for special education programs.

Program Structure and Staffing

Lancaster County uses state funding to contract with LPS to provide a year-round education program at the Attention Center.[5] The center's education director and teachers are all employees of the district. The district's administrative assistant for federal programs is responsible for coordinating the Subpart 2 program at the district level. Her role in this capacity is limited to periodic informal meetings with the center's educational director, an annual meeting to amend the terms of the formal Subpart 2 agreement (if necessary) for the next year, and coordination of the yearly evaluation of Subpart 2 programs required by the state. She reported spending an average of one to two hours per week administering the Subpart 2 program.

The only staff member at the center supported by Subpart 2 funds is the new life skills program specialist, who allocates 100 percent of his time to developing and implementing the curriculum for the life skills component of the educational program. The academic component of the educational program, which receives Subpart 2 support only through the purchase of instructional materials, employs five certified teachers, a paraprofessional, and a secretary. Two teachers and the secretary operate the educational program at the more secure campus downtown, and the remaining staff provide instruction on the second campus. In addition to the education staff, three to four security guards patrol the classroom floor at all times during the school day.

[5] In Nebraska, local districts are not fiscally responsible for the education of delinquent youth.

As district employees, teachers must attend all districtwide teacher meetings and district-mandated training. One training session required of all district teachers is Individual Teacher Decision-Making (IDM), which is based on Madeline Hunter's clinical supervision model. Teachers at the center also participate in the Juvenile Jail Standards Program, which consists of four to six hours of additional training each year. The center's teachers find it difficult to participate in elective training opportunities offered by the district because of a shortage of substitute teachers in the district.[6]

A cooperative agreement between the center and the district requires teachers to maintain a working relationship with the youth's home school[7] to ensure the comparability of the center's education program with LPS's education programs. Both of the teachers we interviewed formerly taught at district high schools and therefore have close working relationships with many of the district high school teachers. These teachers regularly check with students' home schools to find out if they will accept work and credits students complete at the center. Youth attending school regularly prior to being detained sometimes prefer to continue working on their home school assignments so that they can keep up with their classes. In these situations, the student's parents must arrange for the home teacher to prepare assignments and the parents are responsible for bringing the assignments and materials to the center.

Although coordination between the district and the center works well with respect to entering students, there is no comprehensive program in place to help a student move back into the regular school. While center teachers send an exit letter to the student's parents and home school, they rely on staff at the home school to ensure that the student is appropriately placed and that the transition is successful. However, center teachers believe that their former students probably do not receive the attention required to ensure a successful transition because the home school counselors and teachers are already overburdened. Center teachers would like to see transition classrooms established at each district school, as a way of improving the reentry process.

The educational director at the center would also like to see a better approach to transition, whereby center staff, probation and parole officers, and staff members from students'

[6]Substitutes, as well as volunteers, must attend a half-day orientation to the facility.

[7]For the majority of center youth, this is a school within LPS.

home schools are all involved in ensuring a successful transition. However, he recognizes that lack of time and limited resources are barriers to this vision. Although he has read the state's model protocol for transition, he believes it pays inadequate attention to working within the constraints of the juvenile justice system.

As an initial step in developing a more formal reentry system, the educational director assigned one of the teachers to serve as a tracking coordinator one day a week. Beginning in September of 1998, this teacher collected information on each student's first placement after being released from the center. However, since most students have multiple placements once they enter the juvenile justice system, the information generated is quite limited. The education director would like to hire someone full time to track exiting students, but current resource levels are inadequate to support such a position.

Program Services and Activities

As noted earlier, Subpart 2 funds support two basic services at the center; instructional materials used in the facility's academic program, and a full-time specialist to implement a life skills program. The main goal of the life skills component, which is entirely funded by Subpart 2, is "to expose the kids to alternative ways of thinking and behaving." The program consists of a one-hour "Coping Skills" group that convenes two nights a week at each campus, with periodic weekend groups and activities. The program targets the development of communication, problem-solving, emotional management, and other basic life skills, and explores topics such as goal setting, identifying resources, developing a plan, and managing anger.

As this is the first year of the program, the life skills program specialist is still in the process of reviewing available curriculum in an attempt to design a structured, yet fluid, program. Toward that end, the facility purchased the Philip Roy Life Skills curriculum, a series of lessons that focus on social issues, employability, and consumer skills. Specific lessons include "Apartment Seeking" and "How To Apply for a Bank Account." One advantage of this curriculum is that each lesson is self-contained, a useful feature when students are constantly moving in and out of the program. Another means he uses to overcome student mobility and

provide a structured program is to build strong cooperative student groups and to rely on more experienced students to help newer students adjust to the group.

The specialist noted that a major disadvantage of this curriculum is that some of the content and strategies presented are too advanced for his students, who are at a basic level of academic functioning. Consequently, he modifies some of the lessons to better fit the specific needs of his students. In addition to Philip Roy's curriculum, the center has purchased a 12-hour curriculum plus video[8] on how to survive in the regular school setting, which the program specialist has not yet incorporated. The specialist has also adapted information from *Enabling and Empowering Families: Principles and Guidelines for Practice* (Dunst, Trivette, and Deal, 1988) and Stephen Covey's (1990) *Seven Habits of Highly Effective People,* to design lessons for his program.

As an undergraduate, the program specialist received training in the Reggio Emilia approach to education, which emphasizes the responsibility of the entire community in educating the child. The program specialist would like to see that type of approach in place at the center and hopes to somehow resolve the philosophical division between the educational staff at the center, who focus on helping the students achieve, and the rest of the staff, who primarily focus on disciplining the students. In his opinion, all of the center's staff need to recognize their role and responsibility in educating residents, and to work toward a more "seamless" union of education and safety and security staff.

In addition to developing a life skills curricula, the specialist spends time talking with individuals at agencies in the community to identify guest speakers. "I try to talk to folks who can relate to this population. I want to expose the kids to folks like themselves who have changed," he said. So far this year, he has brought in students from the local university and a probation officer to speak with the residents; arranged for Campus Life (a Christian program) to conduct a two-hour spiritual program; established ties to the Lincoln Action Program (a community action agency), which serves as an information resource; and is working with the Department of Health to present a drug education program. "I spend a lot of time begging and trading for services," he said. Many residents also participate in Project Youth, a community-

[8]Neither curricula were purchased with Subpart 2 funds.

based recreation program that is offered to residents at the detention center. "This is someone else from the outside to remind them of what they are missing."

The academic component of the center's program, which Subpart 2 supports through the purchase of materials, consists of four, hour-long, academic periods daily (math, English, social studies, and an individual study hour), and a one-hour study period monitored by the life skills program specialist and an intern from the University of Nebraska. Instruction is individual, allowing each student to work at his or her own academic level and pace. A general equivalency diploma program is also available to students, and arrangements are in place with Southeast Community College to provide on-site testing.

When district students enter the program, teachers review their prior academic record to determine their levels of academic achievement. If a student is from another district or state, staff members contact the student's home school to obtain the student's records or ask parents or guardians to provide the information. In most cases, youth who come to the center have not attended school regularly prior to their detainment. Teachers administer assessments in math and English for these students and assign them individual study packets appropriate to their level of achievement. The study packets, based on the district's regular curriculum, were originally developed for use at the district's alternative high school.

Only about 5 percent of instruction at the center is computer-based. However, through the purchase of basic skills software with Subpart 2 funds, the education director is working to build a greater capacity for computerized instruction. Currently, students must earn the privilege of working on computers by completing assignments and demonstrating good behavior. Students now use computers primarily for researching information and writing papers. Students must be closely monitored while using the Internet and teachers are working on establishing an electronic library with pre-screened pages that the students may use to conduct research on the Internet.

The center's education program has a special education service agreement with the district, whereby the district will provide a special education teacher to work with the student at the center for up to one hour per day, two to three times per week, depending upon the individual education program and the availability of trained staff. While the center did make use of this service once during the past year, teachers reported that in most cases, they are able to meet the

needs of special education students themselves. Moreover, they believe that the special education students actually benefit more by not being singled out for special instruction.

Teachers indicated that they struggle to provide adequate services for students who are low functioning (i.e., students who are developmentally delayed in terms of their social, cognitive, and educational development). As a preliminary attempt to better meet the needs of these students, the staff have purchased first, second, and third grade instructional materials. They have also conferred with a staff member at the Behavior Skills Program (a within-district private alternative school), who subsequently came over to work with a student. However, coordinating with other district programs to provide services for students at the center is reportedly difficult because the teachers never know how long a student will reside at the center. Although the education agreement between LPS and the Attention Center states that "all interventions available to at-risk students in the district become part of the Attention Center education program," the teachers, education director, and district administrative assistant for federal programs all acknowledged that, to date, there has been no coordination with district at-risk programs.[9]

The education director anticipates numerous changes in the education program in the next couple of years, particularly when a new facility will be built. The layout of the educational space at the new facility will permit the expansion of the program. The education director reported that he will continue to build the technology- and computer-based component of the program and that he is looking into the possibility of incorporating the PASS program, as recommended by the state. In addition, the district administrative assistant for federal programs is encouraging center teachers to attend a state-funded training in a new instructional strategy entitled High Scope, an instructional model for adolescents (out of Ypsilanti, Mich.) based on the Perry Preschool Model that emphasizes student choice and responsibility. The administrative assistant for federal programs believes that this model might provide teachers with another useful strategy in working with detention center students.

[9]The county provides related services, such as counseling and mental health services, to center residents.

Program Evaluation and Recommendations for Improvement

The Lincoln district first attempted to conduct a three-year evaluation of the program in 1996-97. They failed to complete the evaluation due to the loss of Subpart 2 funding that year, the lack of guidelines from the state regarding Subpart 2 evaluations, and limited data. The district's Title I evaluator completed the first formal evaluation of the education program at the Lancaster County Attention Center for the 1997-1998 school year. The evaluator collected (1) demographic information through the district's database for those students who previously attended Lincoln Public Schools[10] and (2) data on academic progress (i.e., study packets completed and credits earned) from records kept by the center's education staff and submitted to the district's coordinator each month. The results of the evaluation revealed the following:

- Approximately 46 percent of the youth detained were of high school age.
- Eighty-eight percent (306 out of 347) of youth detained at the center successfully completed one or more study packets.
- Fifty-two percent of detainees in grades 9-12 earned credit toward high school graduation, with an average of five credits per student.

As this was the first evaluation of the program, the district will use these data as a baseline against which to measure future progress.

Program staff use different indicators to informally assess program effectiveness. For many students in the center, the only school credits they have earned are earned while detained, leading teachers to conclude that they are making a difference. According to these teachers, the students thrive on individual attention and a safe structured environment. Additionally, they respond well to incentives, such as having their name on the board when they earn credit.

The district has not formally evaluated the new life skills training program. The district's Title I evaluator envisions working with the life skills program specialist to develop the criteria for conducting a formative evaluation. This process will start with the identification of reasonable indicators of success for students participating in the life skills program. The program specialist identified two "products" that he strives to attain for each student through the life skills component. The first is upward mobility through a structured program whereby residents earn

[10]Demographic data were only available only for current and former district students (206 of the students).

privileges by learning and abiding by the center rules, and move through four levels of achievement: orientation, honors, seniors, and masters. Recently, approximately 10 residents advanced to the masters level, an accomplishment the program specialist attributes to the life skills program.

The second product is increased awareness of negative and positive behaviors. The program specialist judges progress in this area by watching for changes in a youth's thought process, behavior, and actions. He looks for behavior that shows that residents are thinking about the group as a whole through such actions as helping out a peer. The program specialist also conducts more formal evaluation (i.e., tests) as students complete lessons in the life skills component.

The district would like to see long-term state and federal involvement in developing a transition plan that addresses the real problems in detention centers, such as the brief stays of many youth and resource shortages. They believe basing allocations on a one-day count of youth who will reside in an institution for at least 30 days results in dramatically inadequate funding. District staff believe Subpart 2 funding should be based on the total number of adjudicated youth, not only on those who reside in an institution. They report that many youth obtain remedial and support services through community-based centers and believe that if the state or federal government provided greater funding for these youth, the number who eventually enter a residential program might decrease over time.

District administrators also recognize a need for increased national collaboration. They reported that the last national conference on Title I, Part D convened in 1992, and that, in light of statutory and programmatic changes since then, it would be useful to know how officials in other states are using their Subpart 2 funds. District staff members also would like to have a consultant at the U.S. Department of Education, with whom they could discuss such issues as funds allocation. Finally, district employees expressed an interest in federally sponsored training on administering and evaluating Subpart 2 programs.

San Marcos Consolidated Independent School District
San Marcos, Texas

Program Overview

- San Marcos Consolidated Independent School District allocated 80 percent of its $162,000 1998-99 Subpart 2 funds to support a dropout prevention program at the district's one high school; remaining funds purchased tutor services and instructional supplies in six other schools and facilities.
- The primary goal of the program is to assist students master the state-mandated curriculum and pass the statewide competency exam.
- A total of 555 students received services in a variety of locations, including alternative education programs, a private residential treatment center, and junior and senior high schools.
- The high school dropout prevention program uses a pull-out design for individual instruction in math and language arts, with Subpart 2 paying the salaries of one math teacher, and one language arts teacher.
- The attendance rate of high school students served by the programs has increased from 10 to 85 percent in its first year of operations.

San Marcos is the largest city in Hays County, Texas, with a population of approximately 39,200 (roughly 47 percent white, 46 percent Hispanic, 6 percent African American, and 1 percent of other ethnic origin). It is located directly in the center of the Austin-San Antonio corridor, an area with one of the most rapidly expanding regional economies in the nation. The median family income in San Marcos is $42,831, and the rate of unemployment is 3.3 percent. Major employers in the area include Southwest Texas State University and the San Marcos Consolidated Independent School District (CISD).

The San Marcos CISD has one high school (grades 9 through 12), two junior high schools (grades 7 and 8), one intermediate school (grades 5 and 6), four elementary schools (grades kindergarten - 4), one pre-kindergarten center, and an alternative discipline program for students in grades 5-12. The district also operates three other alternative educational programs: (1) the PRIDE Academic Center, an alternative high school on the grounds of the regular high school, (2) the Youth Shelter Classroom, an instructional program located in district administrative offices for homeless youth who reside at the greater San Marcos Youth Shelter, and (3) an education program for residents of the Hays County Juvenile Detention Center. The district currently serves a total of 6,863 students (61 percent Hispanic, 33 percent white, 5 percent

African American, and 1 percent other). Forty-six percent of the district's school-aged children live in families with incomes below the poverty level.

In school year 1998-99, the San Marcos CISD allocated approximately $162,000 in program funding[1] to provide (1) a dropout prevention program at the high school ($133,783), (2) tutoring programs at the district's two junior high schools ($13,000), (3) instructional materials and supplies, and staff development at the three district-operated alternative educational programs ($4,200), and (4) academic supplies at a private residential psychiatric facility for adolescents ($7,579), about 44 percent of whom are adjudicated youth who, along with the residents of the county juvenile detention center, generate the district's Subpart 2 funding totals.

This report presents the results of our visit to the San Marcos CISD in late March 1999 to obtain descriptive information on district activities under the Title I, Part D, Subpart 2 program. We collected data about the program through an interview with the state education agency Title I, Part D Coordinator, a visit to the San Marcos CISD, and review of program documentation. Individuals we interviewed in San Marcos included the district's Title I coordinator, special populations director, and assistant superintendent for curriculum and instruction; the principals of the alternative high school and both junior high schools; the assistant principal and two Subpart 2-funded teachers of the regular high school; and the educational coordinator of the programs at the detention center and Youth Shelter Classroom.

Program Goals and Design

The primary goal of the Subpart 2 program, according to the district's Title I coordinator, is to help high school and junior high school students pass the state competency exam, the Texas Assessment of Academic Skills (TAAS). The TAAS measures student mastery of the statewide curriculum, the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS), in mathematics and reading in grades 3, 8, and exit level; in writing in grades 4, 8, and exit level; and in social studies and science in grade 8. "Satisfactory performance" on the TAAS exit level tests is required for a high school diploma. The statewide assessment program includes the TAAS test and end-of-course

[1]The district received $94,253 from the state educational agency in 1998 and carried over an additional $67,734 in program funding from the previous year that remained unspent owing to delays in grant awards.

examinations in four high school courses tied to the Texas requirements. Five years ago, the assistant superintendent for curriculum and instruction helped establish benchmark measurements for students in grades kindergarten - 8 to assess mastery of the curricula at regular intervals between the state mandated TAAS and end-of-course tests. The district now tests students at all grade levels on TEKS benchmarks every six weeks, with other benchmark assessments taken weekly or bimonthly.

The district operates a comprehensive assessment, coordination, and planning process within the central office, as well as at individual schools, that provides administrators with a good understanding of individual student performance and remedial needs. The assessment process allows administrators to dissagregate TAAS scores by teacher, school, test taken, student ethnicity, and the student's socioeconomic status (i.e, whether the student is from an economically disadvantaged home). Administrators initially reviewed these data to identify elementary students who failed the TAAS, and to target part of their Title I, Part A allocation to provide these students with instruction from a reading specialist, and before- and after-school tutorial help. The elementary school program operates through campus coordination teams that review the total welfare of the child, including academic data, school behavior, medical and emotional needs, and family support, before prescribing specific instructional practices and interventions. According to district staff, the Title I, Part A coordination of services and student review initiative produced "a tremendous up surge in TAAS scores."

In light of the success of the elementary school effort, district administrators decided to use Subpart 2 funds to support similar programs for junior high and high school students, which, in combination with existing initiatives, would establish a continuum of supplementary instruction for students at all grade levels. An assistant superintendent said "It is a faulty assumption that if students get help at the elementary level with reading problems they will not need help later." At the junior high and high schools, campus improvement teams decide the specifics of how Subpart 2 program funds will be used to support the broader districtwide goal of improved TAAS scores. The high school team used program funds to implement a dropout prevention program called Strike Zone (Striving to Recover Idealism, Knowledge, and Enthusiasm) that targets a select group of highly at-risk students in the tenth grade. The two junior high schools decided to establish after-school tutoring programs for students who have not

passed the TAAS. These programs, initiated in March 1998, form the core of the district's Subpart 2 program.

The junior high tutoring program and the Strike Zone program build upon and reinforce the high school's focus on assisting ninth-grade students to complete the core academic program required by the TEKS. The high school has implemented a school-within-a-school program, called the Ninth Grade Center, that provides a variety of services to assist all ninth grade students complete the core academic program. All ninth graders take core academic subjects (i.e., English, mathematics, science and social studies) at the center, and elective classes in other areas of the school. The principal noted that students are more likely to graduate from high school if they obtain four core credits in ninth grade and four additional core credits in tenth grade. The Ninth Grade Center serves approximately 500 students each year, 180 of whom have failed the ninth grade at least once, and 30-40 of whom are nonreaders.

Thus, the district designed the Subpart 2 program to be an important component of the district's overall effort to assist students at all grade levels to master the statewide curriculum and to pass the TAAS. At the elementary school level, the district uses Title I, Part A funding to provide reading and math instruction and tutoring to targeted students; the junior high schools use Part D funds to provide tutoring services for students identified as in danger of failing the TAAS; all ninth grade students obtain assistance completing the core curriculum requirements through a school-within-a-school; and Part D funds allow the district to help entering tenth grade students who remain in danger of failing the TAAS. Finally, some Part D funds enable the alternative high school (PRIDE) to purchase computer hardware and software to support the education of eleventh and twelfth grade students who believe they are better served in an alternative setting.

The PRIDE Center, the Juvenile Detention Center, and the Youth Shelter Classroom based their funding decisions on needs identified in their 1998-99 campus improvement plans. The Youth Shelter Classroom uses these materials to support their dropout prevention efforts, while materials purchased with Subpart 2 funds at the Juvenile Detention Center and the San Marcos Treatment Center support their efforts at improving academic achievement.

Students and Student Selection

Table 1 identifies the seven recipients of Subpart 2 funds, the number of males and females served through each program, and the criteria used to select students for participation.

Table 1: Number of Students Served and Selection Criteria, by School or Facility

Recipient	Number of Students Served	Target Population
San Marcos High School	65 (35 females, 30 males)	Tenth graders with one or no credits, high risk of dropping out, academic failure, low attendance, and committed to participation
Goodnight Junior High School	98 (54 females , 44 males)	Failed all sections on TAAS in reading and math for last two or three years
Miller Junior High School	77 (33 female, 44 males)	Close to passing TAAS, barely passing district benchmarks
Private treatment center	73 (18 females, 55 males)	All 12-17- year-old adjudicated students
PRIDE Academic Center (Alternative high school)	76 (42 females, 34 males)	All students: 16-20-year-olds who believe they are better served in an alternative setting; at-risk of dropping out and academic failure
Youth Shelter Classroom	99 (51 females, 48 males)	All students: homeless 6-18-year-olds, placed by the courts or other social service agency.
Hays County Juvenile Detention Center	67 males	All students: 12-17-year-old adjudicated males

A total of 555 students receive program services; 322 males (58 percent) and 233 females (42 percent). Included in this total are all 242 students enrolled in one of the three alternative education programs operated by the district, who benefit from the use of instructional materials purchased with program funding, and 73 students residing at the private treatment center (44 percent), selected for participation because of their status as adjudicated youth. A total of 175 junior high school students (17 percent), and 65 tenth grade students (14 percent) at San Marcos High School participated in program activities.

Program Structure and Staffing

We briefly describe below, for each of the seven schools or facilities that participate in the San Marcos CISD Subpart 2 program, the amount of funding received in the last school year,

and the principal uses of program funds. We discuss the junior high and high school programs in greater detail in the next section of this report (programs services and activities).

- **San Marcos High School** used $133,783 in program funds to operate Strike Zone, a dropout prevention program for 65 at-risk students who have made a commitment to stay in school. Strike Zone is a pull-out program in which students receive individual instruction in math and language arts. Subpart 2 funds pay for the salaries of one math teacher, one reading and language arts teacher, staff development, and instructional supplies.

- **Goodnight Junior High School** expended $6,500 in program funds to operate an after-school tutoring program for 98 students (18 percent of total enrolled) who failed the TAAS. A total of 21 teachers volunteered to participate as tutors in the last year, six of whom serve as substitutes for any of the other 15 regular teachers and tutors. Program funds allow the school to pay each tutor $20 per hour to instruct students for 30 minutes per day, three days each week, on TAAS objectives and test-taking strategies.

- **Miller Junior High School** used its $6,500 in program funds to operate a similar after-school tutoring program for 77 students (15 percent of total enrolled) who are close to passing the TAAS. Eight teachers provide one hour of instruction three days each week. The school uses Subpart 2 funds to pay these teachers $20 per hour and to provide transportation home to participating students. The previous year (its first year of participation), the school used Subpart 2 funds to purchase Accelerated Reader[2], a computer-assisted program for use by all students for the purpose of academic improvement.

- **The San Marcos Treatment Center** is a private psychiatric residential facility for adolescents, approximately 44 percent of whom are adjudicated youth. The center operates a private school (grades 6–12) on the center campus that offers year-round programs in regular academic classroom work, special education, general equivalency diploma preparation and completion, and vocational training and work experiences. The center used $7,579 in Subpart 2 money to purchase academic supplies for the school under the terms of a cooperative agreement with the district.

- **PRIDE Academic Center**, an alternative high school located on the grounds of the San Marcos High School, serves 76 at-risk students in grades 11-12 who choose an alternative setting for their education. The center is staffed by a principal and five certified teachers (math, science, social studies, language arts, and vocational and elective arts) and offers two, four-hour academic sessions daily for students. Academic instruction at PRIDE is individual and frequently computer-based. The

[2]This program supplements the district-adopted *Project Read*, a research-based language arts program that addresses reading comprehension and written expression.

center used Subpart 2 funding of $1,500 to purchase computer software and other supplies.

- **The Youth Shelter Classroom** is an alternative education program operated by the school district for 99 residents of the Greater San Marcos Youth Shelter for homeless children. The Youth Shelter Classroom, located in the district's administrative offices, provides computer-assisted instruction in all academic subjects from first to twelfth grade. The district supplies one teacher, who is certified in both special education and bilingual education. The Greater San Marcos Youth Council pays for a case manager. The program expended $1,700 in Subpart 2 funding to purchase computer software.

- **The Hays County Juvenile Detention Center** houses 67 adjudicated boys, aged 12-17. The educational program operated by the district at the detention center self-paced and consists of three hours of academic classes each day. Classes are conducted in two portable classroom buildings located on the center campus within the Hays County Jail. Two certified teachers (employed by the district) provide individual and computer-assisted instruction in math, language arts, social studies, and science. The center used $500 of Subpart 2 funds to purchase supplies and another $500 to support staff development.

The district Title I coordinator oversees all Subpart 2 activities; building-level principals are responsible for the program on their campuses. An assistant superintendent said "Subpart 2 is one of the spokes of the wheel." The district coordinates its Subpart 2 program with these federal programs: Title I, Part A, migrant, Eisenhower (Title II), Safe and Drug Free Schools, and Title VI. For example, the juvenile detention center teachers attended training funded from Title II. District coordination of programs was helped by the superintendent's recent reorganization of the central office — all federal programs are now under a single special populations department. District personnel spoke highly of this change, "Now everyone is at the same table, looking at all the data from the various programs. There is a high level of coordination," one staff member said.

Coordination is further enhanced through regular meetings of district and school and facility employees. Weekly, each central office program administrator visits two school campuses to talk informally with students and staff and to observe classrooms. Every two weeks program administrators meet with the assistant superintendent for curriculum and instruction and every two months they meet with the superintendent. The assistant superintendent for

curriculum and instruction and the director of personnel meet with the superintendent weekly. Additionally, principals meet bimonthly with the superintendent.

Although the county operates the juvenile detention center, the district pays for the academic program out of local funds, and teachers at the center are district employees. There are informal coordination efforts between the center's education program and the students' home schools. (Most of the students come from other districts, several from other states.) The secretary serves as the liaison and contacts the home schools to obtain records when students transfer into the center; she also notifies the schools when students are soon to return to their home schools. The secretary and the teachers serve as advocates for the boys with their home schools. "We stay in very close contact with the home schools," one said.

Use of Subpart 2 funds by the San Marcos Treatment Center is guided by the terms of a formal written agreement between the center, whose residents help generate district funding through the Subpart 2 program, and the San Marcos district. The agreement requires the center to adhere to statutory requirements governing locally operated facility participation in the program (e.g., coordinate with other federally funded programs, notify the local school of youths' need for special education services, provide transition assistance). This agreement also identifies the amount of funding the center will receive and specifies that the center use these resources for "educational materials" for "students eligible to participate in the Title I, Part D program." The district, as fiscal agent for the Subpart 2 money, asks the San Marcos Treatment Center (and the other alternative programs that use their money for materials — Hays County Juvenile Detention Center, PRIDE Center, and Youth Shelter) for a list of items they want the district to purchase with the funds. The district then buys and distributes the requested items.

Program Services and Activities

As noted, Subpart 2 funds primarily support academic services to selected students at the two junior high schools and at the high school.[3] At the junior high schools, targeted students receive instruction in test-taking strategies and TAAS objectives three days a week after school.

[3]The district Title I coordinator has already informed the junior high schools that they will not receive Subpart 2 funds in the coming school year, a decision made by the district improvement team, due to the anticipated decrease in Subpart 2 funds. Both junior high school principals voiced their commitment to the after-school tutoring programs and are seeking alternative funding sources to continue their programs.

At Goodnight Junior High School, each of the fifteen teachers who volunteer to participate is responsible for instruction on one TAAS objective, and the students rotate (through the week) among the teachers. Class size for these 30-minute sessions is limited to eight students who are matched by skills and age.

Last year the Goodnight principal used school funds to purchase two compact disc player "boom-boxes," which were used as incentives for students to achieve a 90 percent attendance rate in the after-school program. A random drawing was held at the end of the year for eligible students. All students who participated were rewarded with a pizza party. This year, the principal instituted a performance-based incentive program. Each day teachers give students who work well a coupon. At the end of the week, all coupons (with the student's names) are put in jar for a drawing. Prizes are primarily coupons from fast-food restaurants or movie passes. According to the principal, "These students need extrinsic rewards and they respond to prizes such as these."

At Miller Junior High, four reading and four math teachers volunteered for the program and assist students for one hour in teaching teams. Subpart 2 funds pay for the transportation of Miller school students to their homes following after-school tutoring sessions. Students are provided with a small snack: parents make popcorn, the home economics students bake cookies, and the school supplies sodas. The Miller junior high principal has also instituted a reward system for attendance and performance, using stickers instead of coupons, that allows students to reward other students with a sticker for good work.

At the high school, Subpart 2 funds the two full-time Strike Zone teachers.[4] The school administrators purposefully hired two teachers with elementary school backgrounds because most of the students read on an elementary school level, and because he believes these teachers are typically more child-centered and nurturing than high school teachers. The assistant principal said, "It is absolutely critical to have the right people implementing this program; otherwise, it won't work, especially with at-risk students." Students selected for this program receive four or five hours a day of instruction from either or both of these teachers, depending on the content area. The curriculum used in the Strike Zone program is the same as the curriculum used in the

[4]Subpart 2 funds also pay for substitute teachers when the classroom teachers receive staff training during school hours.

regular high school for mathematics, English I, II, and III; additionally, a reading course is available for those Strike Zone students who require remedial assistance.

Strike Zone classes are held in a portable building that also houses a computer room that is not yet fully operational. Only 20 students are allowed in each class. The students also attend regular academic and elective classes at the high school (e.g., science, geography, world history). Additionally, these students (and other high school students who are marginally passing) are required to attend an extra month of school in order to receive continued academic instruction from the two Strike Zone teachers.

Increased attendance and passing the state competency exam are both elements of the dropout prevention focus of the Subpart 2 program overall. According to these Strike Zone teachers, "Our number one priority is attendance. We will call students to wake them up if necessary. We ask them to call us if they are not going to be in school. Our second goal is preparation for TAAS." The teachers also noted that their students have to overcome a lot of social problems; many students do not live at home, and some are living out of their cars or moving from one friend's house to another's. One teacher said, "We do not want the kids to fail but we also aren't going to cut them any slack. We try to get them to feel secure with us, to realize that the classroom is a safe, fun place."

Program Evaluation and Recommendations for Improvement

Despite the infancy of the Subpart 2 programs in this LEA, both district and school staff believe their programs are successful. The principal at Goodnight Junior High School, which started the after-school tutoring program last year, reported that 35 of the 47 students who participated (75 percent) passed at least one part of the TAAS, exceeding by far the goal of a 50 percent passing rate. Because of last year's success, he raised this year's goal to 80 percent, which matches districtwide benchmarks. The other junior high school started an after-school tutoring program just this school year; however the principal has set the same goal for his students, which matches district benchmarks. Students are scheduled to take the TAAS in April.

The high school Strike Zone teachers, whose students started the school year with a 10 percent attendance rate, report that "So far this school year, we have had an 85 percent attendance rate." Last year the teachers gave students a piece of candy if they were on time each

day for class and provided pizza at the end of the week for good attendance. This year the teachers provided a lot of rewards at the beginning of the year and have decreased the amount and frequency of external rewards as the months passed. "The students do not ask for rewards now. We have begun to change their attitudes."

In February 1999, all but one of the 15 Strike Zone students who took the TAAS reading exam earned a passing score. On the math test, a few students missed passing by only one point. "We told the students that if they passed both portions of the TAAS they would be eligible to attend Fiesta Texas. We decided to take all of them because they all tried so hard for the three days (it took to complete the TAAS)."

Although the state has adopted statewide academic standards and objectives for all public schools, the SEA Title I coordinator noted that these are not applicable to all students. "Some students [served by the Subpart 2 program] take the TAAS, others don't, and we (the SEA) do not keep track of which [Subpart 2 students] do and don't." Principals for the PRIDE Center and the detention center said their students follow an alternative accountability system that allows their students to have slightly lower overall TAAS passing rates and credits accrued than required by the statewide standards.

Three years ago, the state revised its Subpart 2 application to include program evaluation results and grantees must now identify the objectives for participating students and multiple assessment measures for each objective (at least two for each). A list of data sources is also required. Finally, grantees must state what they believe will be the level of program impact (limited, moderate, great). The state has refrained from defining these three levels because of differences in local districts. However, the 1999-2000 Subpart 2 application will require districts to indicate how they determine a program's effect. In the San Marcos Subpart 2 application, the coordinator checked "great" for the effect the district expects of its programs. The indicators she will use to assess the program's effectiveness include: (1) the number of students served by the Subpart 2 programs, (2) the number of high school students attending the extended (school) year program, (3) the number of credits program students accrue, (4) the number of students who pass the TAAS, and (5) the attendance and graduation rates of Subpart 2 served students.

Central office administrators in the San Marcos district repeatedly credited their accountability system as the means to ensure that all staff in the system have the information

needed to make decisions about student needs and resource allocation. This system includes: the district benchmark measurements, the standardization of staff development activities, and the comprehensive communication mechanisms in place throughout the district and in the schools. The district Title I coordinator stated that this system has allowed her to target the Subpart 2 money "to fill a hole we knew about from district data."

State, district, and school-level personnel we spoke with all responded "increase the funding" when asked to suggest program improvements. The district Title I coordinator said, "I would like to know at the beginning of the year the exact amount of Subpart 2 funds. We budget this money to the penny and the SEA can make some changes in the allocation. We would like the Subpart 2 money to be awarded with a hold-harmless clause to aid in our program planning that occurs nine to twelve months before the receipt of funds."

The SEA's Title I coordinator also suggested implementation of a nationwide automated follow-up system for these students, much like the current federal migrant student tracking system. District and school staff would also like to see a change in the restrictions on the use of the Subpart 2 funds, allowing them to use a small portion (perhaps 10 percent) of the money to buy incentives for the students and other items used for extrinsic rewards. The high school assistant principal said, "these students do not understand the long-term reward of education. The reward must be immediate for them to get over the hill. We're hoping to teach these kids to convert their success in Strike Zone to other aspects of their lives."

Southwest Vermont Supervisory Union
Bennington, Vt.

Program Overview

- The Southwest Vermont Supervisory Union, the only district to receive Subpart 2 funding in the state, used $17,707 in program funds for school year 1998-99 to partially support the salary for a full-time education coordinator at a local facility for delinquent youth.
- The facility operates an intensive, transition-to-community program serving 12 males, ages 15-18, with an average stay between 12 and 18 months.
- Program goals include improvement of students' psychosocial functioning and acquisition of life skills; residents aged 16 and older are expected to work.
- Independent living skills training includes household chores and projecting a budget for future expenditure of income earned while detained.
- The educational program focuses on general equivalency diploma preparation; 15 residents have earned this diploma during the last five years.

Bennington County, a mostly rural area with scattered small towns or villages, has a population of about 3,500, only 1 percent of whom are minorities. The town of Bennington, where nearly half of the county's residents live, has a shrinking economy that relies primarily on retail and tourism. The median family income in Bennington is $31,513; the area's unemployment rate is about 10 percent.

The Southwest Vermont Supervisory Union (SVSU), which serves six school districts, is the local education agency (LEA) in Bennington. The SVSU operates a total of eight elementary (kindergarten-grade 5), one middle (grades 6-8), and one high school (grades 9-12), serving 4,159 students. The agency also operates a Career Development Center on the high school campus, to provide technical and workplace skills for high school and adult education students, and provides Title I, Part D, Subpart 2 funds for supplemental instruction at a residential program for delinquent youth known as 204 Depot.

As the only LEA to receive Subpart 2 funding in the state in school year 1998-99,[1] SVSU allocated its entire allotment of $17,707 to the 204 Depot. The depot, an intensive, transition-to-

[1] SVSU is the only school district in Vermont that responded to the state's request for proposals for Subpart 2 funding.

community program accommodating residents for an average of between 12-18 months, used these funds to partially support the salary of a full-time instructor to coordinate the facility's educational program. Located in a mixed residential and commercial area of Bennington, the program serves 12 adolescent males.

This report presents the results of our visit to Bennington in April 1999 to obtain descriptive information about SVSU activities under the Title I, Part D, Subpart 2 program. We learned about the program through a structured telephone interview with the state education agency (SEA) Title I director, on-site interviews with the LEA's Title I Coordinator and facility staff, and a review of program documentation (e.g., application for Subpart 2 funds, program descriptions).

Program Goals and Design

Established in 1971 to serve youth in the Bennington area, the depot program experienced early success and eventually became a statewide resource for the relatively few adjudicated youth in the state. The central purpose of 204 Depot is to improve the psychosocial functioning of its residents, many of whom have deficits in several areas. A majority of depot residents have learning disabilities and require individual education plans. Many come from abusive homes, and many others have a history of alcohol or drug abuse. In view of these and other deficits, program administrators believe most residents are unlikely to return to their regular schools or to pursue postsecondary education. Thus, the educational component of the depot emphasizes life skills, general equivalency diploma preparation, and vocational experience rather than traditional academic instruction.

Students and Student Selection

The depot may serve up to 14 youths at one time. At the time of our visit, 12 males, aged 15-18, resided at the facility, only one of whom is a minority. During all of last year the program served a total of 23 youths. Potential depot residents are referred to the facility primarily by case workers with the state's Department of Social and Rehabilitative Services (SRS).

Prior to admission, prospective residents, and their parents if permitted by SRS or the court, tour the facility and discuss the program with facility staff. Staff at the facility provide

youth with a resident's handbook outlining facility rules and expectations. The case worker, social worker, probation officer, parent(s), and child then decide if a facility placement would be in the child's best interest. Staff have never rejected a potential resident when space was available. Once admitted to the program, the resident signs an agreement to adhere to facility policies and rules.

Program Structure and Staffing

The 204 Depot Program is a nonprofit organization governed by a board of directors, with an operating budget of $523,734. Facility staff include a program manager, an education coordinator, five counselors, a case manager, and a psychologist. The average staff tenure is about 15 years. The educational coordinator, whose position is partially funded by Subpart 2, has been with the program since 1988.

Staff of 204 Depot meet weekly to discuss the progress of each resident and to coordinate education, counseling, and vocational services. The first 60 days of residence at the facility are considered an evaluation period, during which the case manager meets with the resident's family. The case manager then stays in contact with resident's family throughout his stay at the facility, coordinates with SRS as needed, and evaluates the youth's case with social workers or probation officers every six months.

Students' time at the facility is heavily structured, with every hour of the day scheduled for specific activities, such as meals, instruction, work programs within and outside the facility, daily household chores (i.e., cleaning rooms), recreation, and quiet hours. After the first 60 days at the depot, residents are eligible for furloughs (weekend visits to their homes). Residents earn furloughs through appropriate behavior, as articulated in the resident's handbook. Residents may earn one furlough (generally lasting from 4 p.m. Friday through 5 p.m. Sunday) for every calendar month; as residents near completion of the program, furloughs may become more frequent.[2] To successfully complete the depot program, a resident must follow facility rules, accept responsibility for his own actions, and have an acceptable plan for his future that includes a vocational or educational goal, workable living arrangements, and a budget.

[2]Free time in the community is closely monitored as many residents are on drug therapy for Attention Deficit Disorder or are overcoming an addiction to drugs.

Depot residents benefit from a variety of linkages the facility has established with other resources in the Bennington community. For example, one student whose test scores indicated marked improvement in academic achievement is allowed to attend the district's regular high school. If a student requires additional tutoring to prepare for a general equivalency diploma exam, the educational instructor refers students to the Tutorial Center (a local Adult Basic Education program). The education coordinator may also enroll students who require basic literacy skills in this program.[3] Finally, as we discuss in the next section, area employers provide depot residents with an opportunity to gain work experience and earn an income.

Program Services and Activities

Services and activities available to depot residents include educational instruction, counseling, employment opportunities, and field trips. As noted, the facility's educational program has a pragmatic focus intended to support the overall program emphasis on the acquisition of life skills. The education coordinator noted that his teaching methodology is based on William Glasser's "reality-based theory." "Teaching students to balance a checkbook and working on a monthly living budget becomes math instruction," said the coordinator.

The education coordinator believes the regular public school system has let these kids down and that many of the youth have negative views of teachers. To counter this problem, he spends the initial weeks with each student attempting to explain the fundamental importance of an education to success in all areas of life. The educational coordinator works with each student to determine an appropriate course of study and then provides one-to-one, or small group, tutorial assistance. He ensures that students are tested according to state requirements, uses the district's special education staff to administer the assessments, and assists all students identified as in need of special education to meet the goals of their individual education plans. At the time of our visit, one facility resident attended the district's high school, while the remainder worked on general equivalency diploma preparation.[4]

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[3]The facility does not use volunteers to teach literacy skills because the complexity of issues its students face demands a level of staff continuity and frequency of contact most volunteers are unable to provide.

[4]The one student attending the local high school had been retested and found to have improved sufficiently, thereby not requiring an individual education plan.

Residents receive between three and four hours of instruction per day in science, social studies, math, reading, and language arts. Instruction at the facility takes place in a single room that contains two computers and minimal software (e.g., word processing, spreadsheets, graphic packages) students use to complete their assignments. Most of the instructional materials are general equivalency diploma texts and workbooks, along with a small library of fiction donated by staff or community groups. Recently, the educational coordinator wrote a grant proposal to a private foundation requesting $2,500 for new hardware (e.g., compact disc player, scanner, digital camera) and software (e.g., graphic design, desktop publishing). He believes that these youth will be "returned to a world where even a truck driver will need to know how to use a computer."

Student counseling occurs in daily group therapy sessions conducted by the program manager and one of the counselors, both of whom have bachelor's degrees in psychology. In these sessions, residents are encouraged to discuss whatever is on their mind--anything from schoolwork, the food served for dinner, or psychosocial issues related to living at the facility or resulting from a visit home. Once each month a family counselor conducts a home visit with the youth and parent or guardian. Additionally, a psychologist meets with each student for one hour two times each week; if psychological testing is required, the local hospital psychologist (paid as a consultant) provides assistance.

Employment opportunities in the community for residents 16 years or older are provided by local construction companies and fast food restaurants. The work supervisor is responsible for driving youths to and from their jobs and for monitoring their work habits, ethics, and hours. The program manager is responsible for administration of the income the students earn. Employers pay the depot for all students' work (typically minimum wage), and the program manager deposits the money in individual savings accounts. All residents who do not attend school full-time (and thus work) must prepare a budget during their 60-day evaluation period that is based upon anticipated expenses, as if the residents were living independently. The facility then withholds a percentage of the students' income for projected expenses such as rent, utilities, and food, and places it into individual saving accounts for the residents to use after leaving the facility.

The manager places any remaining income into a Depot Residents Account from which the resident is expected to pay for his own clothing and incidentals, and from which he may draw an allowance of up to $25 per week, if funds are available.[5] The depot program does not accept clothing and allowance money from the state, and also discourages parents and others from giving residents money, believing it is best for students to earn their own money for clothing and incidentals. This allowance is used as a reward for good behavior and each Tuesday in group sessions, a resident may request that funds be taken out of savings to buy clothing or incidentals. The program manager noted that a resident who works and resides at the facility for a year or more can leave the program with $2,000 or more in savings.

Field trips to community sites, such as the library, are another component of the depot's life skills and transition focus. The education coordinator recalled that one of the youths from Bennington had "been on the steps of the library but never inside it." He attempts to integrate students' experiences during field trips into his instruction. For example, trips to local museums or plays are linked to American history units, and students read and write poetry after visiting the grave of Robert Frost, which is located in Bennington. Depot residents and staff also take an annual camping and fishing trip to Canada, and staff report that students find this trip to be one of their most rewarding experiences. In their previous school history the behavioral problems of most facility residents precluded their participation in field trips or other special activities.

The district's Title I coordinator and the facility's program manager and educational coordinator agreed that more educational resources are needed at the facility. While they would welcome more traditional materials, such as paperback books, workbooks, and magazines, they noted that residents especially need computers and associated software. Staff members believe that Internet access and a wider variety of software would help them to more fully engage students in the learning process and to allow students to better express themselves. To illustrate this point the educational coordinator recalled a student who was having difficulty living up to the terms of his agreement and was asked to write about how he felt and to share it with the group the next day. With the aid of a computer he checked his work for spelling and grammar. He also added clip art, which gave him greater confidence in his work and made it easier for him to share with the group.

[5]This deposit is made after the facility deducts payment for worker's compensation insurance.

Program Evaluation

The Title 1 Coordinator collects and provides to the SEA the total number of students served by the program, broken down by age and ethnicity. Pre-and posttesting of students, beyond what is required for obtaining a general equivalency diploma, while done, is not routinely completed for every student, owing primarily to the staff's inability to know when a particular student will leave the facility. A total of 34 residents have earned their general equivalency diplomas this way since the educational coordinator began keeping records 10 years ago, including 15 over the last five years. In a common area (parlor) of the facility, a plaque has the names of youths engraved for those who have obtained their general equivalency diplomas.

Program staff members noted that older youths tend to be more successful because they realize that they soon had to survive on their own, while younger teens typically enter the facility with more of an attitude of resistance to the program's structure. The staff also noted that to succeed, the youth had to stay with the program almost a year. Agency and facility personnel hope that the report of a recently organized dropout prevention task force will help the education coordinator and other facility staff members better address residents' needs. The report will present the findings of a survey of 20 dropouts, 16 at-risk students, 16 truant students, and 15 parents of at-risk students. Survey items for students address their best and worst memories of school, whether they found school difficult, and a number of other questions whose aim was to identify the sources of student difficulty. Other questions solicit information on the educational background of parents and their perceptions of their children's ability to get along with others. The survey also asks parents what would most help their children fare better in school.

The program manager noted that many students tend to be artistic, and he would like to see the program offer them more opportunities to develop that skill. He has tried to find employers in the community that would reinforce this talent (e.g., graphic design businesses, or pottery makers) with no success. He believes that if the facility's computer equipment could be enhanced with software, digital cameras and scanners, the educational coordinator would be more successful in showcasing his students' talents, and that enrolling students in the local community college for art classes would become more of a possibility.